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# NEW AND NOT NEW:

*MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.*

(EPIPSYCHIDION

SERIES.

VOL. I.



BOSTON:

A. WILLIAMS AND COMPANY,  
135 WASHINGTON STREET.

1874.



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TO  
THE CHRISTIAN,

HAPPY, SORROWING, DOUBTFUL,

YOUNG OR MATURE,

*This Work*

IS FRATEERNALLY DEDICATED.

## NOTICE.

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THIS (Epipsychidion) series of religious works, contains the following volumes:—

1. New and Not New.
  2. The Truth and the Way.
  3. Friend with Friend.
  4. Creeds and their Import.
- 

The following are the comments of a few, of the clergy and others, who have read one or another of the MSS. :—

“The spirit of devotion and Christian faith is purifying, elevating, and refreshing.”

“It is earnest, intelligent, thoughtful, devout.”

“I am astonished at the amount of thought contained; the prayerful spirit throughout; whilst in parts it is beautiful exceedingly.”

“It is intellectually and spiritually suggestive in every sentence.”

“Though written in a graceful and easy style, it is vigorous and logical, and well calculated to meet the wants of the hour.”

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Although the first volume is more especially an Episcopalian work, the remaining volumes are equally applicable to all Christians,—their aim and spirit being for the greater Unity of all.

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LETTER  
TO THE  
ANGLO-AMERICAN BISHOPS.

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RT. REV. SIRS: — From an eloquent and pathetic appeal, of one of your number, the Bishop of Western New York,\* for the Restoration of the Unity of the CHURCH, and not doubting that all, of your consecrated body, are animated by the same Christian spirit; feeling also that “piety,” whatever may be its efforts, appropriately begins at “home,” doing there with its might what it finds to do, — the writer has been incited to present before you this volume, written in the simple aim of unity and peace.

Having, in private, received the favorable criticism of some of the clergy of our communion, of high standing, it is trusted, that, if meeting still further your approbation, it may, although but a mite of contribution, assist you in your labors during the ecclesiastical year, — especially in the Lenten season, — for the growth and revival not only of personal religious life, but of that of the Church at large, in all your vast dioceses; whilst the volume which is to follow, on the “Divine Atonement,” it is believed, will meet with but one response from the whole Christian world, — thus far “UNITING” the “Church of God.”

That such may be the result, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, is humbly but earnestly, the prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

\* The Rt. Rev. Arthur Cleveland Coxe.

“The Pilgrim writes Epipsychidion,  
And yet there’s nothing new . . . ” — POEM.

“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be ; and  
that which is done is that which shall be done : and there is no  
new thing under the sun.” — ECCLESIASTES.

“Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go  
on unto perfection.” — HEBREWS vi. 1.

## INTRODUCTORY.

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NO other preface is needed to this little volume, than that which is afforded by the opening piece: Being the first in date, it may also be considered the seed, the ground-work, of all that follows.

In the Title\* selected for the series — of four small Works, — and which may be explained “*An increase upon the soul*,” or, “*The progress of the soul towards all good*,” is contained, it is believed, the true doctrine; namely, that it is not truth itself, but the human spirit, which *advances*; thus discovering more and more, the spiritual truths which have always existed — in the bosom of God. In this way it is, that things, or ideas, may be new, and not new, — new to the soul, to

\* Ep'ipsychi'dion (pron. Ep'-e-se-ki'-de-on); literally, “Upon the little (finite, or human) soul.”

ourselves ; but, in themselves, old and unchanging.

Thus truths, — though such from time immemorial, — by the manner in which they present themselves to individual minds, or are re-presented by these to others, may have much of the freshness of new, and original, ideas.

As one more phase of that many-sided prism, the human soul, in its REFLECTIONS of truth, these simple, but earnest pages, are offered to simple and earnest readers.

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PART I.

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## I.

### THE ARTISTS' RECEPTION.

. . . CAME away with disquietude, and ill at ease with myself.

. . . Before retiring, opened the New Testament to read ; fearing, nevertheless, that it might condemn me for—I knew not precisely what. But my eyes immediately fell upon the words, the account, of Jesus going among “publicans and sinners,” and eating with them. Then followed the touching parables of the leaving the ninety and nine sheep to seek for the lost one, and of the joy in heaven over the sinner that repenteth ; and the beautiful story of the prodigal son, who, after feeding upon husks, returned, and was welcomed by his father with joy to his *home*.

Yes, the Saviour went among sinners. There

in that crowd to-night He might have been, were He now dwelling upon earth, seeking those who were astray, and speaking words of pardon and of welcome to those who desired to come to Him. And—*was He not there this night?* There were present those whose lives were consecrated to Him; and their hearts must have been beating warm with His life-blood flowing through their veins.

They who are thus specially devoted to His service as the profession and business of their lives were no doubt refreshed by the pleasant and social gathering; for to them it was change and respite, and it was an occasion in which all could unite, and all might enjoy. There were ministers of the gospel; clergymen of every name; and their presence simply in the spirit of unity and peace, with the pleasant intellectual enjoyment, it seemed to me, must lend an elevating, and, as it were, a sanctifying influence to any assembly: and it is desirable that such opportunities may frequently occur. Still, to those to whom it was less a change, it must be comparatively a lesser good; and, on coming home, *I* felt that a *true* refreshing would be religious communion with a friend, even two or three words dictated by the Spirit of truth; and *I* sighed for a pleasure with which no other can compare.

But was not Jesus there too, going along with me by the way, exciting those thoughts of longing for His perfect peace, and refreshing and abiding presence?

Afterwards, what a thrill of joy passed through my mind, as I read of the rejoicing among the angels of heaven over one sinner that repenteth; and felt that I, perchance, was one of those over whom there is joy,—one that repenteth!

Then I asked myself, "What can I do for Him who has loved me, and given Himself for me, and called me unto Him?"

I said, I would make mention of His name, and would seek opportunity,—if I could not in one way, I would do it in another,—and would bear my testimony to the great Power and Love which hath redeemed us; and would endeavor to rescue life from vanities and frivolities, its trifles and nothingnesses; thus hoping in some measure to fulfil the great mission which is given to us all, to live usefully; to the highest use if possible,—advancing religious and spiritual good,—so living to the glory of God.



## II.

### AFTER READING "ENGLISH HEARTS AND HANDS." \*

WHAT a glorious privilege, and how faithfully turned to account,—the scattering among those rough, but genuine-hearted, workmen, the bread of divine nourishment! And how eagerly did those striving and struggling souls drink in the refreshing and vivifying waters of eternal life!

Some of these soon went to their eternal joy,—to the home provided for all who love their Lord. There they must have met their beloved and noble-minded commander† who had gone before; and whose delightful work on earth it

\* An English book, recording the labors of several ladies among the "navvies" and working-men of the Sydenham Palace, &c. These were gathered frequently into religious meetings; and, from being seriously impressed, were greatly improved in mind and heart.

† Capt. Headly Vicars, who fell while gallantly leading a charge in the Crimean War. Many of those "navvies" sent to the Crimea, were

was to instruct and pray with just such men. To the last hour he was faithful to his trust.

There also, in those fields of light, do they not walk side by side with those refined and gentle ones who visited them while on earth as angels of love and goodness, grasping in cordial friendship their hard and roughened hands ; discerning, under their sunburnt looks and coarse and thread-bare garments, manly and tender hearts ? Oh glorious mansions and divine abode ! where *all* the redeemed in Jesus shine in garments of light, and all are washed pure in the blood of the Lamb ; where all, with that high inheritance, are made equal ; where the poor become rich, and the rich are made poor in spirit, and humble of heart ; where the ignorant become learned with the intelligence of the Lord of Hosts, and the learned lose their wisdom, in the power of His might !

What is the passport to this heavenly kingdom ? — to that world of surpassing beauty, purity, and bliss ? It is to bow down with contrite and broken hearts, for our own unworthiness ; to cast ourselves entirely upon Him, who alone can redeem and save ; to accept of His love and sacrifice, and be washed in His blood ;

looking forward to a happy meeting with their former officer and friend, but were too late : he had already fallen. Some of them were soon afterwards killed in battle, or died of wounds received.

and by the water of regeneration, receiving the gift of His holy Spirit, to become followers of the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

Are we also ready? Shall we be able to meet that last hour with rejoicing, knowing that we have done what we could; that the talent has not been hidden in the ground, or laid up in a napkin; that we have done some little for that Lord who has done so much—nay, *all*—for us?

In the midst of all things, may we keep the lamp within us—however small its ray—trimmed and burning, that, when the Bridegroom cometh, we also may enter joyfully in!





### III.

#### GOD'S WILL.

THE will of God, — the WILL of God. O God! what is thy Will?

I know that Thy will is that our hearts should be at peace; that we should receive just that which thou markest out for us, — even though it be pain, — without murmurings, and without complaint; that step by step, as thou ledest, we should follow on, — now to this, and now to that; bearing always in our mind the simple unity of *what* thou willest, and *as* thou willest.

It is Thy will that we should love thee with our whole soul; and that as thou didst manifest thyself in the world, so we should manifest Thy spirit in us by gentleness, meekness, patience, humility, and long-suffering; doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

It is Thy will that we should have faith in thee unfeigned, in simplicity of mind and godly

sincerity ; clarifying it continually by the light which thou givest, externally and internally ; but avoiding any self-conceits of wisdom, " philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Thou willest that we should renounce selfish desires and gratifications ; not seeking our own happiness, but rather the happiness and good of others ; but that which Thy bounty givest, we should receive with a thankful and simple heart ; loving and enjoying it because thou givest it.

It is Thy will that to any call of a human brother, our hearts should respond with quick affections, earnest for his good ; to encourage him in the way of right ; and, if wrong, to help him to the better way, as thou mayest teach.

O, our Father ! Is there not a store for us, of love and affection, in return ?

It may be : may be not.

My child, it is not for thee — for man — to look into the hidden secrets of the Almighty. As thou hast said, it is for thee to go on day by day, step by step. There will be some hearts to cheer and bless thee ; but if I reserve for Myself the infinite love in the deep well of thy being, permitting no mortal to draw it forth, art thou to say, nay ?

My Lord ! to love thee, and to have thy love,

is sufficient ; and, with the golden threads of calm and kind affection here and there, which thou allowest, we will go on with the treasure of thy love and thy will, enriching more and more our spirit ; and stilling down into its depths, like the serene peace of an angel's soul, that desires only that all things may be one, — one with the Father, one on earth, and one in heaven.





#### IV.

#### THE PERIOD OF LENT.

HOW beautiful is Lent !

Many may be surprised at this exclamation ; and to those who associate this time only with “fasting and weeping and praying” it may not seem “beautiful :” but it is a blessed and hallowed season on that very account, — the fasting, mourning, and praying.

To the true Christian, there are no moments of greater peace, than when he prostrates himself, in entire humility of spirit, before the God and Father of all ; acknowledging his unworthiness, sinfulness, and shortcomings. It is then that God, who loves a contrite and humble heart, puts His own peace within, — a peace that passeth understanding, — sealed with the gift of faith in the

atonement of Christ Jesus. Then therefore, in this long season of Lent, when such times and opportunities of humiliation recur again and again, how abounding, settled, and pervading must be that peace !

But do any object that, by repetition, these services must become wearisome, and thus lose their unction and efficacy ? Every *genuine* Christian grace and virtue, becomes strengthened and improved, by exercise and practice. If we *truly* humble ourselves, we become more truly humble in heart, and love more and more the attitude of humility. If we are accustomed to pray, prayer becomes our need, and we resort to it willingly more and more. If we deny ourselves, the sweet calm and purity of self-denial, become more and more attractive. How hallowed, then, must be this time to those who follow it in sincerity and faithfulness !

It is so difficult, in these days of activity and excitement, amid the multiplicity of every species of attraction, and demands upon one's time, to abstract some moments of quiet meditation for one's self ; or to have occasionally the greatest of all pleasures, — a little converse with a religious friend ; or to go once in a while during the week to some service of the Church ! How dear then, to the Christian, should be this period set apart when he is at liberty, and is expected, to with-

draw himself from the enticements of society and the world ; nay, is commanded, almost, to consecrate himself to spiritual duties ! How can any one, who has a hope of the salvation of Christ, neglect this privileged opportunity, or pass it lightly over ; or abandon it to the same whirl of earthly interests, to which all the rest of the year is likely to be abandoned ? Ah ! rather, why do they not rejoice at this refreshing, beneficent respite ; at the rich treasure thus garnered up for the “ poor in spirit ” ? Why should we not run with alacrity and joy to the opened sanctuary ; to receive there the heavenly dew and the rich graces of the Holy Spirit, which must be sought for, to be won ?

As the Sunday is the “ golden clasp, which binds the weeks together ; ” so is the peaceful, quiet, earnest Lent, a door, which opens into a more hallowed year, — a year more beautiful with all true blessings, for those who have accepted and faithfully used, these opening blessings.

Lent ! Lent ! — With what thankful joy do I receive its prescribed services and duties : turning with repentance to my Lord and Saviour, that so be He may have mercy, and abundantly pardon ; resisting the fascinations and temptations of society, which are all around us, luring away so insidiously the soul ; and exercising more abundant sympathies in the heart, and

charity for all ; seeking in every way to become more truly a follower of the Lord Jesus, and a child of our Father who is in heaven !

A child of our Father in heaven ! If He desires it, shall we not become so ? And if, in His providence, He allows this period to recur year by year, shall we not avail ourselves of its advantages, to help us on the way ?

But for what ? That we may, when it is over, return to lightness, frivolity, and love of display, — going on “after our own heart” ? Oh, no ! but that, with spirits purified, minds humbled, and affections new-kindled with the love of all good, we may go forth to our daily work, strengthened and renewed in all righteousness ; diffusing more and more around us, that which is true and right ; and in innocence, and simplicity of heart and life, ever increasing in kindness and affectionate love one towards another ; doing faithfully, nobly, and virtuously, whatever may be our part and duty in the world.





## V.

### COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

. . . WAS prevented from receiving at church the Holy Communion: but an hour's meditation in my room, has placed me in spirit with those who were celebrating the memorials of our Lord, whose praises were rising in prayers and hymns from the thousands of human hearts — not only those in my own parish-church, but in the many churches throughout the world — which at that hour, on this first sabbath of the month, commemorated our Lord's death, and offering of Himself, in sacrifice, for our sinful, human souls.

How sweet, how all-powerful, is thus, the communion of souls, the communion of saints; those who are bound together in one worship, — the worship of the Lamb that was slain! Absent in the body, but present in spirit; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, — one Lord, by

whom we are all redeemed and saved ; one faith, which binds us to that Redeemer, the Lamb that was slain ; one baptism, into which we all die and are buried, — die to sin, selfishness, and worldly-mindedness, and are baptized into the spirit and the following of the Lord Jesus. How holy, how beautiful, is this communion ! Though space, though distance, may intervene, spirit mingles with spirit, and one heart, one soul, rises to heaven.

Although we may have personal acquaintance with but few only, scattered here and there among the vast assemblage of the redeemed of all ages and climes, quickened and made conscious by communion with those few, in the life immortal, we know by what feelings, thoughts, and emotions, each one of them is filled and governed, — how innumerable soever they be, and whether on earth or in heaven, — one feeling of their utter unworthiness before Him who came to redeem them ; one thought of their entire dependence upon Him for salvation ; one emotion of joy and gratitude that He has washed them in His own blood, and made them “kings and priests unto God.”

Holy and blessed communion, — the communion of soul and spirit ! If one could but know how pure, chaste, and spiritual its joys ; how it casts into the shade all intercourse of a merely

worldly nature, how would one not seek its hallowed purity and peace! But, even by those who have experienced this, how rarely is this true joy attained! Difference of exterior duties and occupations, separation by time and place, combine, with a thousand contingent circumstances, to prevent frequent intercourse, where religious discourse or expression can have sway; and though longing for such opportunity as the very breath of our life, as the atmosphere in which we feel we must needs live in order to grow to any spiritual fulness, the desire of our hearts must usually remain unsatisfied; and we must be content with the few crumbs vouchsafed to us, here and there. Thus our hearts would go unfed of each other, were it not for that spiritual communion, which is independent of time, place, and circumstance; and by which each knows what is inwardly passing in the hearts of others; and thus by its presence alone, without outward communication, we are strengthened as by an electric chain, one with another.

In this world we have crosses and disappointments, trials and temptations, of all kinds: but these must be met and endured, or resisted, that so our faith may work for us patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and only hereafter will be the rejoicing, the full communion of soul with soul. Then the mists will

be cleared away, and we shall see and be seen as we are ; and shall have the satisfaction of understanding hearts and minds ; and shall experience the joy of entirely reciprocal friendship and affection, disturbed by no possibility of change or failure, of doubt or distrust. Harmony and peace, and sympathy, pure and holy, will beam from the brow ; and the mind will be swayed by the gentlest, yet most radiant love.

And, more than all, we shall have communion with the one *loved* One, the Saviour and Redeemer, who has washed us from our sins in His own blood, and who will have clothed us with His own righteousness, — our FATHER, our GOD, and our GUIDE, who has led us through all this earthly pilgrimage, — through the dark wilderness, when days and nights were dreary ; or in the sunshine of life, when our feet might have fallen on the slippery way ; who has been with us by day and by night ; who has called us by our name, and made us to follow in faith after Him. Oh ! He will be with us : where He is, there shall we be. He will raise us to His own joy ; His own full peace will be upon us ; He will be the centre of all hearts : we and our loved ones will unite in Him. One tie, one bond, will unite us all, — that of the Lord Jesus, our Brother, and yet our King ; of human affections, and yet of divine power and might ; feeling with us, and yet of authority to direct and govern.

Blessed and happy relation ! An exhaustless and imperishable love will pass from Him to us, from us to Him. It will be our rejoicing that we have followed Him in all things as far as we were able,—in tribulation and sorrow and suffering, through good report and evil report ; and our crown of reward will be one look from Him, which will transform us into His radiant peace and light.

Oh blissful communion ! when, with our Lord and our King, — our Father, our God, and our Guide, — and with the just made perfect, we shall sit with our beloved ones, — may our friends all be of the number there, — around the throne ; or walk in the gardens, and by the waters of the river of life, with a white stone ; and on the stone a new name written, — *our* name, — written in the Lamb's book of life !

Let us cherish that communion now. Let us so dwell in the "household of faith," that our hearts may be prepared, by kindness, by gentleness, by forbearance, by forgiveness of one another, by "love unfeigned," for those glories which lie beyond, — the joy and the crown of rejoicing.

W



## VI.

### EASTER-TIDE.

WHAT time more beautiful in all the ecclesiastical year, than that at Easter? — Easter even, Easter morning, Monday and Tuesday of Easter week; — the great repose in the tomb on Saturday, after the preceding pains and anguish of the crucifixion; the joyful rising on the Resurrection-morn; the peaceful walk with the disciples; and the re-appearance of the Master, on the succeeding days.

Who would lose those calm and hallowed hours, watching by the tomb of Jesus, after his burial? To his immediate followers, even, we can scarcely imagine it to have been a time of anguish, notwithstanding he was apparently buried forever from their sight. They would have been sad indeed, sorrowful, stricken to the heart's core; but so great had been the previous anxiety, distress, and excitement, that when all

was over, against any possibility of theirs to have helped it, they must soon, we apprehend, in the astonishment, suddenness, and irresistibleness of the occurrences, have sunk into a quiet submission, if not reconciliation : for such is the effect of inevitable circumstances, — when we can no longer do any thing to avoid or prevent, they cause us to yield without further resistance, or opposition ; and in such a yielding there is *peace*, though mournful and sad it may be.

The disciples then, we conceive, though deeply mournful and pensive, were at peace, after the painful events of the preceding days ; a peace mingled with surprise or stupefaction, it may be ; they hardly knowing what to do, or what to think. Their hopes had been suddenly cut off, and there was no light from the future, to cast even a pale ray before them. All was summed up in those still moments as they stood by, or thought of, the grave where they had laid him, calm, cold, and dead, but at *rest*.

But now, the pale shadows of that rest are lovely ! We sit there, and watch by that peaceful repose, after the dread agony is over ; and to us what peace and loveliness in this rest ! because the halo of the Resurrection-morning already casts its radiance before, and we feel that *that* “rest” is instinct with life ; that, though the body be dead, the dead body shall rise again ; and that

yet in his "flesh shall he see God." Peaceful repose and hallowed sabbath,\* in which Jesus lay in the tomb, after that day of toil and suffering! Yet how sad would be the remembrance of even this repose, at each recurring year, were it not for the softening halo of the Rising-morn with its hallowed light!

Indeed, it is only this hallowing that can render it a peaceful and blessed time to us; for, without the testimony of the resurrection, what insupportable dread would seize the heart, in reflecting that infallible virtue and supreme holiness should be thus subjected to the wiles of sin, violence, and destruction! This thought may enable us to conceive of the dismay in which the disciples must have passed those hours, they having no such assurance, no anticipating light, of the glory that was to come. To them, then, the Easter—Rising-morn—must have imparted a joy, of which we, comparatively, can possess but a faint resemblance. Also, as the hours of the Saturday,—Easter even,—are to us calm, hallowed, lovely, with this light going before; so is our joy on Easter morning calm and subdued, though not less real,—because of our anticipating it. Time has thus tranquillized all; mingled as it were, and mellowed, both the joy and the pain.

\* The Jewish sabbath.

Scarcely have we an adequate idea, of the new life, to which this event must have given rise, among those of that day. Old things were swept away, the dust and mists of earth: all things became clothed, with a divine, and spiritual glory.

We can have but a faint conception of what they must have felt, when they realized this fact; but that conception enables us to enter into their joy, when, on the Sunday morning early, they beheld angels,—clothed in long white robes,—sitting, one at the head, and another at the foot, of where the divine Redeemer had been lying. Blessed sight! holy joy! God had come in power, and had rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre; and the pure body, spiritualized, had come forth redeemed from the grave, a glorious form upon the earth! And when the Marys came, he, kind and gentle as before, though bidding them not touch him, sends to his brethren, the disciples, that remarkable message: “I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.”

O holy Jesus! those divine footsteps in the garden, that tender voice in addressing Mary, that blessed showing of thyself, thy hands and thy feet, to thy disciples, have made the earth bright with a glowing and radiant halo! A serene and holy joy, born of heaven, diffuses itself, from those blessed scenes and recollections.

Yes, that vision is one of loveliness and peace. The Saviour was risen ; he stood in the garden ; he appeared to Mary (so plainly did he make himself visible in a human form, that, seeing a man, she took him to be the gardener) ; he spoke those loving words to her as in the old time. Yet not to her alone did he reveal himself, but to one and another, — his very self, the one who had died, but now, risen, spiritual, with his work all done, was ready to ascend to where He was before, — into heaven.

We cannot wonder at the surprise, uncertainty and doubt, which took possession of the disciples, for the next few days. He appeared among them, and disappeared. They assembled together in *fear*, yet with great joy ; and they talked of him as they walked by the way.

That most blessed of all blessed discourses too, on the walk to Emmaus, when the risen Jesus drew near and expounded to them the holy scriptures and the divine prophecies concerning Himself ; — how would we not treasure one hour of that holy converse, face to face, and voice answering to voice, with the divine Redeemer of our souls and bodies ; with Him who must be our guide in life, and our support and comfort in death ; and to whom we owe, not only the earthly blessings and privileges attending our revealed religion, but also our happy Christian faith and life !

Although we may not have this converse now "face to face," and voice responding to voice, yet we may have its influence intimately, by the communion of the Holy Spirit, so that even our hearts may "burn by the way." Let us then, each year, as the Easter-days come round, make the commemoration of those scenes, our special object and delight; living over with the actors of those times, as far as we are able, the realities which they have depicted. Through these hallowed services, they become to us, also, a beautiful reality,—a reality of the heart and the spirit,—as well as a knowledge and memory of the mind.





## VII.

### FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

WHERE is now our Lord and Master, whom we were lately following through the last changes of his mortal life ; being present with him in the instituting of the holy supper of remembrance, and entering with him the Garden of Gethsemane ; watching with his heavy disciples in those sad hours ; going with him to the judgment-seat, and looking on when all had deserted him ; beholding him on the cross, forsaken — for so it seemed in that hour — by even the Father in heaven, (but only for a time, — for the greater manifestation of the glory both of the Father and the Son ;) and being buried with him, in the quiet grave ?

Then the glorious morning of the resurrection, when, joy of joys ! *His* face was seen again, beaming with more than mortal light. He came to them, and went ; was seen, and not seen ; a

vision, going in and out among them, but not of them ; walking by them, talking with them, showing them His hands and His feet, yet vanishing again from their presence ! Wonder of wonders ! and a mystery of life and of beauty ! Human, yet spiritual ; spiritual, yet human !

To *us* where is He now, after this time of his resurrection ? Have we eyes to see Him as he is, and hearts so believing, and minds so purified, and raised above earthly things, that He can manifest himself to us in all that beautiful mystery, coming and going in our midst ? or has the world already shut down its clasping folds upon our hearts, thus banishing him from our spiritual sight ? Let us struggle to free ourselves from those insnaring bonds, that that spiritual vision may ever be enabled to manifest itself in our midst, and irradiate our lives.

Heavenly Father, may we see Thee in thy Son always ! May we so strive and cry, that, through the dark shadows of this world, we may ever cling fast hold of Him ! In joy or in sorrow, may that one Form be ever before us, defending us, and lighting up our pathway, — defending us from the enticing allurements of prosperity, and enlightening us, when surrounded by the thick clouds and darkness of adversity ! For, without Him, we are nothing. The cares, occupations, difficulties, and perplexities of life fill up all our

heart, casting only drear shadows there ; for He alone is substance, and life, and light.

Blessed Jesus, may thy presence be so with us, that, on the morning of the Ascension day, we may see Thee ascend in full glory to the realms above ; there to be our everlasting Stay, our King, our Priest, and Mediator unto God, our Saviour and Redeemer, our immortal Life and Hope, our eternal Joy and Crown !

“ What had I been if thou wert not ?  
 What were I now if thou wert gone ?  
 Anguish and fear were then my lot ;  
 In this wide world I stood alone.  
 Whate’er I loved were safe no more ;  
 The future were a dark abyss,  
 To whom could I my sorrows pour,  
 If thee my laden heart should miss ?

But when thou mak’st thy presence felt,  
 And when the soul hath grasped thee right,  
 How fast the dreary shadows melt  
 Beneath thy warm and living light !  
 In thee I find a nobler birth ;  
 A glory o’er the world I see ;  
 And paradise returns to earth,  
 And blooms again for us in thee.

Thou strong and loving Son of Man,  
 Redeemer from the bonds of sin,  
 ’Tis thou the living spark dost fan  
 That sets my heart on fire within.  
 Thou openest heaven once more to men,—  
 The soul’s true home, thy kingdom, Lord ;  
 And I can trust and hope again,  
 And feel myself akin to God.”



## VIII.

### ASCENSION DAY.

THE anniversary of the Ascension of our Lord. What joy do we not derive from the commemoration of this day! because it brings to our mind directly, the fact, that He is our *living* Saviour; that He is reigning in fulness of life forevermore; that He is now our Surety, our Strength, our Salvation.

To His immediate followers, who could not have foreseen the experience that was afterwards to be theirs,—the inward coming of the Holy Ghost, as the result of Jesus' absence in the flesh,—his final disappearance (after those forty days of appearing and re-appearing among them) must have been accompanied by sadness, in some measure; yet, even then,—we are told,—they “assembled together with great joy.” The resurrection of the spiritual body, and the existence of the life immortal, were truths which

they could then well understand: and from these they derived infinite consolation; for they knew that "where he is, there shall we also be."

To us, what fulness of content and happiness lies in that one fact of our Redeemer's ascension! so visibly is it shown therein, that "death and sin and hell were conquered." All the might of "spiritual wickedness in high places," of principalities and powers, had been waged against the Holy One. He, as man, had seemed to succumb to this overwhelming force. He was obedient, even unto death; and his mortal life was the sacrifice in this great struggle, his enemies having triumphed in that which was outward and visible. They had done what they could; and deep dejection must have fastened upon the minds of his near disciples, when they found that not even He, who, they fondly hoped, was again to restore Israel, had been able to resist the overpowering onset.

But all the exertion of spiritual wickedness in high places, of principalities and powers, had been waged in vain; for from that tomb, in which the body, conquered, subdued, lifeless, had been laid, there arose a spiritual, and, now, glorified body. The powers of evil believed that they had conquered; but here, again, was a living form—THE Form,—going in and out, real, beautiful, immortal. Earth and the grave, and death

and hell, had been overcome. What joy, what strength, what repose, for *us* ! In Him who has thus conquered shall we all conquer. In Him, who is the resurrection and the life, do we all rise again, not only hereafter, but now,—rise from sin, from evil, which is as a grave to those enslaved within it. In His strength, and newness of life, we have life eternal ; in His purity our souls are pure ; in His peace and triumph we are peaceful and triumphant, although the troubles of this world may beset and pursue us on every side.

Ah ! let us be strong, and go on our way unwavering ; cherishing within our hearts that “peace” and that “joy.” Let us gaze, with a long, lingering look, upon Him who has ascended before us, cherishing within our spirits His holy instructions and His parting blessings, that when in due time the shower of His own Spirit shall descend,—the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which he promised to his disciples,—our souls may be filled also with Its divine presence, and renewed and animated with this new life from heaven,—His parting legacy to a dying world.



## IX.

### INCARNATION OF THE SAVIOUR.

#### I.

“HUMANITY has its two sides ; one side in the strength and intellect of manhood, the other in the tenderness and faith and submissiveness of womanhood. Man and woman, not man alone, make up human nature. In Christ, not one alone, but both, were glorified. . . . As St. Paul says, ‘In him is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female.’ Think of him as the divine-human Being, in whom both sides of our double being are divine and glorified, and then you have the truth which Romanism has marred, and perverted into an idolatry,\* pernicious in all ; in the less spiritual worshippers, sensualizing and debasing.” †

If Christ were only the *Son* of God, a per-

\* Mariolatry.

† Robertson’s Sermons.

fect man indeed, and "divine," as having the inspiration of the Father, but still man peculiarly, and not God,—as Unitarians believe,—He can represent only the male side of human nature.

What is woman, then, to do? Has she no exemplar; no model; no one who has lived her life, and, by living sinless in it, has made *it* also divine? Were it not so, wretched being would she be!—no one for her having consecrated womanhood, purifying and redeeming it by taking *her* nature in sinless and self-sacrifice. But we cannot, as the Roman Catholics do, give that honor to the Blessed Virgin, however pure and self-denying may have been her life personally. *She* did not give herself to a painful death, nor even to a self-sacrificing life, as far as we are able to learn,—for the whole race of women. We know nothing of her but what pertains to the quiet, natural, retired, and domestic life of woman.

We have no authority in Scripture for supposing that the Virgin Mary occupied a position above the rest of womankind, except in being the blessed agent in the hand of Providence for working His great will on earth: and, as such, she was indeed blessed; yea, blessed and honored above all the women of the world. To have been so honored and so blessed we must conceive of her as surpassing all others, un-

doubtedly, in adequate qualities, — in faith, in angelic purity of soul, in submissiveness, in susceptibility to divine influences. Yet Jesus, in speaking of her, never exalted her above other women: on the contrary, when the multitude were disposed to do so on one occasion, he replied to them, “Yea, rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.” And when told that his mother and brethren were without, desiring to speak with him, he answered, looking around upon the multitude about him, “Behold my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.” And, when dying, it was simply as a *human* mother, that Jesus intrusted her to a *human* friend.

That the Virgin Mary is the “Queen of Heaven,” and of equal glory with the Son, having almost or quite as much part in our salvation as He, would be perhaps harder for some persons to believe, than the doctrine of the incarnation of Deity. But into this belief the Romanists have rushed; and why? Because, perchance, they felt the necessity — overlooking the twofold humanity of Christ — of an immaculate, divine personifier of the race of WOMAN. No doubt this is a deep truth, — the want of a Saviour of woman’s nature, as well as a Saviour of man’s nature; and if Christ be only man, and not

God, a divine man though he be, He can, as was said before, represent only that half of human nature.

Where, then, would be the Saviour, the *peculiar* Saviour and Redeemer of woman? Is there no one to whom she can cling, who has experienced her emotions, her trials, and her temptations? Woe to her were there not One whose nature is intimately allied to hers, and identical with it; to whom she can have recourse in her sorrows; in whom she can hide herself; in whose life she can live; to whose soul her soul is united,—pulse to pulse, and heart to heart,—*herself*, with a stronger element added to it!

So with man. In his Saviour he finds *himself*, and something added,—something more tender and loving. Thus Humanity meets there in that One; the male side and the female side; the full Humanity, “strength and grace, wisdom and love, courage and purity, divine manliness, divine womanliness.”

It is no obstacle to the woman, that her Saviour should have had, outwardly, the form of the man: it were better so, as representing the head, the director; “for the head of the woman is the man.” It is no obstacle that He was thus represented, if his *soul*, his spiritual nature, were feminine as well as masculine. And why should it not be so? Here, it appears to us, lies the

secret and explanation of the great mystery,—if we may attempt an explanation of things so high, and so sacred :—man and woman make up human nature ; each alone is but half. Man corresponds with the mind, the intelligence, of the universe ; woman, with the soul, the love. So Christ, in his outward form and in his human mind, represents the more corporeal, masculine part, with its strength, its physical endurance, its far-sightedness, its wisdom ; but in the affections of his human heart, and in his most inward spirit, which was all love, He corresponds with the feminine nature. His gentleness, his tenderness, his forbearance, his forgivingness, his obedience to duty, his submissiveness to the divine will, his self-sacrifice, are all of them feminine qualities or virtues. That He is thus designed to be the Saviour of either man or woman indiscriminately, is apparent throughout all Scripture.

What finite being could thus represent in One, the full and complete humanity,—which Nature on earth, or rather God, has separated into two parts, irrevocably distinct ? Who but Deity could manifest, individually and perfectly, these two in One ?

“Male and female created he them,\* . . . in the IMAGE OF GOD,”—the Perfect Humanity.

\* Gen. i. 27.

## II.

Do we not yet see how this doctrine of the full and perfect Humanity, in God, in whose image we are created, and that of the Incarnation, alone coincide with those great facts in nature, the existence and life of both man and woman ?

To make the complement of his being, man needs union with the feminine side of our common humanity ; and so does woman require the same union with man to complete her fullest life.

In that true union, or unison, does each find a rest, a joy, a peace, a satisfaction of earthly existence, which is unattainable without. In that peace, rest, and joy, are imaged forth the peace, rest, and joy of God ; because then, in the fullness and harmony of our completer being, are we more particularly in his image, more like him.

Thus the happy love of man and woman, has always been presented as the highest copy of the divine happiness on earth ; and hence it is, we must believe, because Deity, our Saviour, represents in Himself both of these, the male and the female side, that, in the failure of this love and union on earth, man and woman, each, find that peace and blessedness in turning to Him. To man He supplies spiritually, not only all the qualities of his own being in an enlarged

and superior degree, but those of the feminine nature also ; and to woman, besides the like strength added to her own, are given all the qualities of the man, for her to lean upon, in her Saviour and her God.

Thus, in default of the perfection and completeness on the human side, of our double being, there is this One to whom we can turn ; in whom all is compensated. In Him, when we find it not in each other, are the rest, joy, and peace which the soul of each man and of each woman must possess, in order to be satisfied ; and thus is the discipline of life ever carrying us, by joy or by sorrow, towards God ; for the more perfect fulfilment of our nature in Him. In a happy union of the man and the woman, His image being thereby more and more revealed and perfected in each, their hearts become more and more elevated towards Him, more understanding and more cognizant of Him, as it was designed they should be ; whereas, in unhappiness and incompleteness, men and women, failing each other, are drawn or driven, as it were, to God and to Jesus, in whom they learn to find that which is unfailing and perfect, — that which in each other they had missed.

But if Jesus, who is the representative of God on earth, the express image of His person ; to whom we are unceasingly commanded by all re-

ligious teaching to come; of whom the voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, HEAR YE HIM;" and who himself said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and *I will give you rest*," — if he were human only, — man alone, — and were not the incarnation of Deity, he could not, as we have seen, give this rest to man and woman equally: woman must be cast out of the great redemption, the great repose; he, as was said before, not having taken her peculiar nature upon himself. Or if, although but man, he could, according to our own argument, give this rest to woman, affording her in him the support and completeness of the masculine side of humanity, then it would be man who would be cast out; for, being man alone, he could not give to man that which would be lacking to his completeness.

It is true, the Saviour says, that in heaven they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. This might seem to militate against the truth of the doctrine of the *one* humanity, dually composed: but it is to be apprehended that this was never meant to declare the spiritual severance of husband and wife, parents and children, — in other words, of the masculine and feminine natures, — since these were, indubitably, originally constituted for each other: but rather that

the union will be no longer for earthly purposes ; but of an angelic character, — producing, we must believe, a blissfulness, of which this earth can afford but a foretaste, and a foreshadowing.





## X.

### A RELIGIOUS COURSE.

IT would seem that a Christian—one who has passed from death unto life; who has experienced within himself the change which has made him a follower of the Lord, and not of the world—would, his clearness of vision separating the “things of the flesh,” from the “things of the spirit,” lay down at once, all that, which would be conflicting, or inconsistent. And so he is ready to do, in the first fervor of a new love; when the pure warmth and glory of that new life, first glows in all his veins. He can lay aside any habit, however inveterate it may have become; he can forego the gratification of any taste, how long soever it may have been indulged: for, with the aid of the new spirit which has taken possession of him, the chains and shackles of the old have been all unbound, and he is now a free man,—the power of God in Christ

being in him all-powerful to work and to do ; and, with a heart full of love and submission, he can give up all things for Him, who so loved us. In that moment of fervor and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is all easy so to do ; natural, as it were : and, while that inspiration of the Spirit of God is retained, he is one with Christ, and can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth him. What *He* desires, only, does the Christian desire : every taste, affection, and disposition which *He* would not approve, is cast off easily, as something external to himself ; and he yields only to that which is pure, innocent, and health-giving, both to body and to soul.

There are those who continue in such simplicity of heart, looking only unto that which God wills ; ready to renounce any thing which may appear to conflict with His designs ; yielding never, but always overcoming ; renewing themselves in Christ day by day ; never conquered, but always conquering ; or, if failing, rising again to new triumphs. So walked the apostles ; so did the early saints and martyrs, whose lives were a sacrifice for the truth's sake ; so have done true Christian souls in all times since ; and so do such continue to do, — with the life of God as vivid in their souls, — as was experienced by the first disciples, among the hills and valleys of Judæa. All who have lived earnest and

consecrated lives, in all ages of the world, and in every part of it, have found it their work and their joy, to bring the body into subjection ; to work out in their own persons and character, the purity of the principles of the gospel of Christ ; “adding to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity ;” letting all these things abound within them, and conforming their lives to the pure example of Jesus.

But it is not always thus, with those who have been spiritually born again. Christians remain in the world the same as before ; and must continue exposed to the same surrounding circumstances and temptations. They have their natural affections and dispositions, constantly appealing to them. They must go out as before, into busy life, into the midst of their old occupations and associations. It is now that the real conflict begins, with sin, the flesh, and the world, — which are constantly striving to regain their lost influence. Does the Christian still cherish and keep alive that new spirit, which makes all things easy ? Now, only, has begun that real warfare, in which he must struggle on, till death, — the very warfare which was given him to wage, and from which there is no escape.

How dangerous is this position! — dangerous, unless the Christian continually bears in mind that the human heart is “deceitful above all things, and .desperately wicked.” Dangerous, unless he keeps constantly in remembrance his own utter weakness, and inability to preserve himself; and looks unceasingly to that divine Saviour who alone is able to succor, and save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him; and cherishes ever in his heart that gracious Spirit, which warns, guides, and directs, when one yields to its influence.

Many do not heed these little whisperings of the Holy Spirit; but gradually, in the midst of old scenes, fall back into old ways, — forgetting that they were to be, henceforth, new men, in Christ Jesus. Then arises a fearful division of mind; old shackles and sins are resumed again, and life becomes mingled, — partly inclined to God, and partly turned away; and, with these two demands upon it asking to be obeyed, the heart is torn, the conscience is distressed; and finally the spirit is riven with anguish.

A young man, “a thousand miles away from his home,” begged prayers for himself in a house of worship, having, as he said, “tried all other means.” He acknowledged himself as having been religious; yet to have been bound for years, by a sin, from which he had now long

prayed, in an agony of spirit, to be released. Oh! is there a sin which may not, with God's help, be banished from the soul? What can one do who has thus crucified the Lord anew, and put Him to an "open shame"? Is there any way but utterly to abandon that sin, *outwardly*, cost what it may? and God will then take care of the spirit within, for Christ's sake, cleansing and re-sanctifying it. Say not that one has not the power: the power will be given, if one has but the WILL. Make no compromise: if it be a sin, and one knows it, turn from it peremptorily and irrevocably, and the chain is broken. In that war with Satan, make no parley: stand upon his heel, crush him, — and abandon him forever!

What a moving picture does the apostle give, when he says, after enumerating such as, in their sins, shall not inherit the kingdom of God!\* — "*And such were some of you*; BUT YE ARE WASHED, BUT YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, AND BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD."

Even the offscouring and vile of the earth,

\* The passage of St. Paul (in which many items are as strikingly applicable in our modern civilization as in the ancient one of Greece and Rome), in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. vi., is this: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you," &c.

washed and made clean! — made pure and white in the blood of the Lamb! “Though our sins were as scarlet, they shall become like wool; though they were crimson, they shall become whiter than snow:” washed and made clean, and clothed in a new robe of righteousness, — a righteousness without spot or blemish, — the righteousness of the Lamb that was slain!

Although the religious course is, in itself, a warfare that ends only with one’s life, many of the foregoing remarks may apply more particularly, perhaps, to such as those who have once been vividly enlightened by the Holy Spirit; and, by its power, have felt themselves at once renewed in heart and mind. But how is it with the great multitude of those who cannot point to the hour, or the day, when they were “born again,” but who yet feel themselves humble followers of the Lord Jesus; wishing at least, in their hearts, to be so, and desiring to bring all their life into subjection to him? Have they sometimes, doubts and distrusters, hinderances and difficulties, without any apparent cause? Let them examine themselves; and see what sin, what forbidden pleasure, may be reigning there. It may be a love of something worldly or unworthy; or it may be no outward fault, but, more subtle and obstructive still, some vice of the mind; some pride, vanity, or self-seeking; some

prejudice, or want of forbearance ; or regard to self, and forgetfulness of others. Where any of these exist, the spiritual vision is obscured ; and, if they continue to be indulged, one cannot be accounted truly religious, and a Christian, although professing the Christian name. But when even one little sin, (though no sin is small in itself,) when even one sin, is laid aside and overcome, how clear does the vision become, and how light and joyous the spirit ; until, by the operation of the Spirit of God, another is brought to light, when the warfare must begin again ; and one is ready to exclaim, " Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? "

But, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, each sin will, by degrees, be broken up, cast out and destroyed ; until step by step the spiritual vision becomes more clear and strong, and we can look through all things, and say, " I am more than conqueror through Him who loved me and gave himself for me. "

What calmness, peace, and joy, to go on in this true Christian course ; looking always upward, going ever forward ; and the light within shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day !

Again : among many who call themselves Christians, and consider themselves such, it is painful to see how little they can be so known by their fruits. Day after day, month after month,

year after year, they go on, perhaps, with fretfulness in their mind ; harsh and impatient words upon their lips ; petty jealousies and rivalries in their heart. It is a pain to see any professing the name of Christ, giving no evidence, by the outward meekness and gentleness of their lives, — at least, in an *endeavor* for such, — that they are His.

It is only by crucifying the flesh ; laying absolutely aside all self-indulgences, selfish ways, and interests ; that we can deliver ourselves to the pure spirit that stands ready to enter, — the spirit of gentleness, kindness, love unfeigned, beneficence, meekness, humility. “For the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Oh ! let us who may be preserved from great sins, but who indulge in lesser ones, — let us remember, that the smallest sinner needs an entire renewal, and conversion of heart, as well as the greatest. “Ye must be born again,” says the Saviour, — “born of water and of the Spirit.” It is by Christ alone, who is the door, that we can enter into the fold, by taking upon us His spirit in newness of life ; and by clothing ourselves, or by being clothed upon, with His righteousness.



## XI.

### LITTLE THINGS.

“**L**ET that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.”

How often is a harsh word uttered, and an irritable, impatient manner used, one towards another! and little speeches, unmeaningly spoken, perhaps, are taken up, exaggerated, misconstrued in the interpretation, and reported around, producing unhappiness and painful alienations, where before, perchance, there had been but harmony and peace; and thus real ill-will and ill-feeling spring up, from incidents — which may in themselves — have been but unimportant and trifling.

Is it possible that such temper and spirit can be indulged, by any who have made the profession of our holy religion? If the mind of Christ be in us, doth it not constrain us to all gentle-

ness, patience, forbearance, and even long-suffering if it be necessary, one with another? And, if that spirit is not in us, are we not to strive for it as the one thing needful?

To profess Christianity, and yet not to follow Christ; not to be like him; not to have His holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, — is an inconsistency, a contradiction, a discord, a delusion. That “wisdom which is from above is first peaceable, then gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits.” The Holy Spirit can exist only with tenderness, gentleness, meekness, and love; and to believe that we are influenced by it, and yet to be harsh and censorious, unkind, uncharitable, unamiable, and ungenerous, is, and must be, a fatal mistake. That Spirit may come to us, at times, — for it is always appealing to our heart and conscience, — and at times we may listen to and obey it; and then it spreads its radiance over all our being: and from this we take encouragement, and believe that we are surely children of God, and are walking in the way of life and truth. But if, in the moment of temptation, we carelessly yield to a natural, evil self and temper, then that Spirit of God has no real possession of our hearts; has not sanctified them, and made us one with Christ: and until we have received that sanctification, when all our heart and mind are brought willingly — as the true thing

and “altogether lovely” — into subjection and obedience to the purity and blessedness of that mind which was in Him, we are no real Christians in the true sense of the word.

Christianity is not in the mere belief that “those things are so:” it is in the *life*. It is a faith which works by love ; which penetrates into all our heart, — making us do and love those things which Jesus has taught us to love and to do ; which the Father would have us love and do ; which the Holy Spirit, if sought for, enlightens us in what to love and what to do, — namely, all generous, noble, and lovely things ; all self-denials, when our inclinations would conflict with right towards others, or are to our own souls’ injury ; all that is holy, pure, and self-sacrificing : for self-sacrifice — giving up our own desires, if need be — or unamiable impulses and dispositions ; and putting in the place of them all kindness, charity, and amiability (not weakly, — but in the spirit of Christ) — is the very life, the every-day, constant life, we are to lead, as members incorporate of Christ’s body, — the manifestation of his true Church on earth.

It is true, this is the work of the Holy Spirit ; but it is as effectually done within us, if yielded to, as if we had all power to do it as of ourselves. It needs only the assenting will, the giving-up of our mind and heart to a holy will, — THE will

greater and holier than ours, — which would then work in us, to will and to do, of Its good pleasure.

These things, which occur hour by hour, or even momentarily, — do they seem but “little”? Do they appear too small to take notice of, in the great career of life; or of Christian deeds of benevolence, and philanthropy? But we have to remember that each one of us, in ourselves, is an individual Christian; and only as Christianity is developed and manifested in us, personally, do we add any thing, to the amount of Christian influence in the world.

These “little things,” are the first principles and elements, of the Christian character and life; and without the foundation of the whole man being thus pervaded by the Spirit, and by the “things of the Spirit,” whatever structure is built must be but unstable, and ready to fall by any shock, or at any moment. “No foundation can any man lay than that which is laid, — Jesus Christ;” and Christ was all meekness and gentleness, all mercy and loving-kindness, all charitableness and forbearance. To be like Him, we must have, therefore, that mind, that spirit.

Is it possible for any to go on not possessing this spirit, and yet thinking that they are following Him; that they are living the life of Christians; that they are professing Christianity?

Does "Christ" mean nothing? does "Christianity" mean nothing; or only mean, communing outwardly with the Church, and taking the name of Christ upon us? How fatal, how awful, a delusion! Christianity is the great, regenerating power of the world: it is to renew, re-create, regenerate us individually, in body, mind, and soul; not the world at large,—at once; but ourselves, personally, each and all. It is to pervade every fibre of our being, making us one in heart and spirit with Christ, the author of our faith: then shall we be Christians, in unison with Him; and then shall we live Christianity, doing its work of bringing "peace on earth, good will to men." If this were the motto and spirit of each life, how would happiness and virtue, harmony and joy, be spread over the earth, and the world become at once a paradise of God!

Let not one of us who take the name of Christ ever think for a moment that we are his, unless we bring, or strive to bring, all our temper and spirit into subjection to the mind that was in him. He is our exemplar, guide, pattern, our model, our life. To him must all come; to him must the whole world bow. Only as we learn of him are we his followers; only as we take his principles and live them can we be called after his name,—Christian. We are not Christians living in our own way, but in his way. We are

not Christians when our own self is indulged, but when his pure wishes, desires, and will are yielded to. He wishes that we love one another ; be kind, courteous, forbearing to one another ; forgiving one another in love.

Besides such, there are many "little things" which are apt to be passed unheeded by. Not of the least significance are feelings and expressions in regard to daily occurrences, — those of the weather, for instance, that commonest of all topics ; but which is so entirely under the control of Providence, that mankind have, and can have, no voice or influence in it whatever. To us, mortals, it may often be gloomy, dismal, uncomfortable, tedious, melancholy, depressing ; and we are not expected to be insensible to these effects, or to refrain from speaking of them ; though with a little patience, all comes right again, and we are allowed as freely to rejoice in the "sunshine, after rain." But with what a painful jar do expressions\* — not unfrequently heard — strike upon a mind that is accustomed to feel God's rule, in all things of nature, as well as of spirit ! Such seem a direct arraignment of the government of Deity ; unconsciously, no doubt, to those who utter them, as they cannot have learned to consider all things as from God.

\* *E.g.*, ". . . provoking! . . . hateful!"

It would seem, that, in a Christianized community, a sentiment of propriety of language in such respect, would long since have pervaded every mind of common culture ; even if not especially, religiously disposed.

Happy were they — in the instructions of their childhood — when, on some rainy day of disappointment, their little dissatisfactions were met with such words as these : “ My child, say not ‘ What a shame ! ’ ‘ It is too bad ! ’ in regard to the weather ; for it is God alone who rules and governs that ” ! Such lessons from a pious parent are not forgotten ; and in the place of murmuring and complaint are cherished quiet submission and reverent patience ; fulfilling also that other lesson, that “ *all is for the best ; God knoweth and doeth all things well.* ” Such a sentiment, strictly maintained on even one point, though simple, must have its healthful influence on many another ; and, *vice versâ*, a disregard of propriety in respect to any thing of so frequent recurrence, must affect, lower and injure, the whole moral tone of the mind.

These “ little ” points, in the aggregate, make up greatly our characters, our lives. But what is to be remembered is, that in their effects there are really no little things ; that little things become great things : they are the tissue of which

the whole is made, the groundwork which underlies all, the foundation, the seed from which all springs. "First the blade," said Jesus, "then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

Therefore needful it is that we watch and pray, that we enter not into "temptation;" that the whole life, in small things as well as great, be one of harmony, purity, and peace.

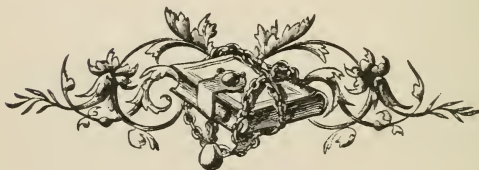
There are undoubtedly many, — of us all, — whose conscience and aim would lead them to the right, but whom habit — our second nature — has already overcome with its invincible chains, —

"Who know the right, but still the wrong pursue."

What, then, can be the discipline and the struggle of such, but to break through those chains; and never rest until they are freed, — free men in Christ Jesus; until they have taken His "light and easy yoke" upon them; that burden of meekness, and lowliness of spirit, which brings them into the very liberty of "sons of God"? "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," was His own blessing upon that humble and gentle spirit.

Neither should those whose aims are right, be disheartened or dismayed, because they have not hitherto walked, altogether, as "children of the light;" for we must all *grow*, — grow in grace.

Little by little, in general, does the light come to any of us ; and little by little do we overcome, until we are built up “a spiritual house, a habitation of God through the Spirit.”





## XII.

### SUPPLY OF SPIRITUAL WANTS.

ON two occasions, Christ fed the multitudes when they had been gathered for long hours in a desert place, to listen to his teachings, and would have “fainted by the way,” had they gone away without food. Five thousand, and seven thousand, were thus supplied with a meal, by the multiplication, or increase, of a few loaves and fishes.

We are not ordinarily supplied in this manner with our necessary food ; because the earth is overspread with riches for man’s use, and he has means and faculties whereby he is enabled to appropriate these. But on those occasions, a miracle was wrought, for the plain and direct purpose — while at the same time it manifested the power and glory of God — of refreshing those hungry people ; giving relief to their actual physi-

cal wants, — in other words, just because they were hungry, and in need.

Shall not He, then, who is a spiritual Being, and whose offices and works are mostly spiritual, — shall he not supply us with *spiritual* food, that which we need for our souls, just as really and literally, as the thousands in the wilderness had bread and fish given to them?

God does give us in a measure, and in certain ordinary modes, the spiritual nourishment which we need, and which is ever open to our wants; just as the fruits are scattered over the earth to supply our physical needs. There is the Bible; there is the Church; there are the sabbath, and religious books and friends; and innumerable other upspringing fountains along the pathway of life, — upspringing, in acts of kindness, love, and duty; in the spiritual thoughts and emotions elicited, in our daily human intercourse. All these seeds, or germs, God has strewn abundantly over the earth; requiring of us only to cultivate them with care, and to gather in the harvest: thus shall we be supplied with the spiritual food, on which our souls shall live, grow, and flourish.

But, notwithstanding all this provision, — are there not moments in the experience of every one, when he finds himself, as it were, in the desert, in the wilderness; with no blade of grass

to be seen, and no trickle of water to quench the parching thirst ; when he is either lost or astray, having wandered blind-fold out of all the reaches of the common Providence, not knowing whither he went ; and where he must either faint and sink, or be led out by some hand mightier than his own ?

There, weary and wasted, shall he lie down, helpless, given over to grief and despair ? or will not the Saviour, who supplied physical food to starving men, come to give *him* the spiritual nourishment he needs ?

It is true, the "multitudes" were in the way of their duty ; listening to Jesus, and learning the way of life by treasuring up his words ; forgetting all else, intent only upon him ; while we, perchance, have gone indolently or wilfully astray, have followed pleasure or our own self-seeking. How, then, can we expect to be tenderly cared for, all our wants, like theirs, supplied ?

Ah ! God is merciful ; and although we may have rebelled against Him, and done that which we ought not to have done, the moment we come humbly to our own mind, to a sense of our needs and infirmities, He sends down expressly the dew of His grace, to water, nourish, and refresh our penitent souls. It may not be all the rich pasture that we should have had ; but it will be sufficient for us, to bear the burden of the

way, and to be conducted gradually again, from the wilderness, into the fuller fields and more abundant harvests, which He had all along provided for the common use.

Then let us take this to ourselves,—that although we may thus have wandered, and are “far off ;” as soon as we shall stop, recollect ourselves, becoming conscious of our error, and seek to return, at that moment,—if there can be no other spiritual aid,—God will pour it down miraculously, from heaven, by his own Spirit ; for never yet did He leave a soul hungering and thirsting, when there was no aid but in Him.

If it were so with physical wants, as of the multitudes in the wilderness, how much more must it be, of those spiritual wants of which He alone can be the provider !

It is true, He may seem sometimes to be far away ; but this is only because He desires us, for our own good, to use all the means He has placed in our power ; and then it is, after the effort,—should all these fail,—that He comes and fills our souls with his own sustaining presence.

Let us not fear, then, to enter the cloud, or upon the desert, if in the simple way of duty ; following where He leads. Or should we do so ignorantly, in error or in infirmity of flesh or of

spirit, we may still trust His mercy who leads the "blind" oft-times, by a "way they knew not."

We may dread the wilderness only when wilfully, or knowingly, going astray. But even then, when repentant, a ray of light will come direct from heaven, to illuminate the pathway. It may be but a gleam at first ; but, if followed up, it will guide at length to the green pastures and clear waters. It will lead us in God's way ; and, wherever or whatever that is, it will be — PEACE.





### XIII.

#### GOD'S CARE FOR US.

**I**N the midst of dull and gloomy thoughts . . . opened the Bible to read the Lesson for the Day, and was forcibly struck by these words:—

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? . . . For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. . . . Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.”

“Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” That is, does it not mean, if God has given the life, which is greater than meat, will he not certainly give the meat wherewith to feed it? And if He has formed the

body, which is of far more importance than the raiment which covers it, will he not as certainly provide the raiment with which to supply it?

Then, if He has given a soul and mind, love and affections, all which are infinitely more than the mere outward body and life, will he not as certainly give us the means whereby these, too, may be preserved and nourished?

As a general thing, we know that He does this; that is, we know that the world, in common, is supplied with all those intellectual and spiritual means that are necessary. But how is it in individual cases, — when we come down to our own particular selves? Are we fed, supplied, and nourished, with that of which we have especial need? Ah! here comes in the hard lesson of “faith.” We do not possess these things, because we do not *believe* that we receive them; that they are designed for us. We have lost, perchance, rich blessings which might have been ours abundantly, because we had no *faith* that they were meant for us. We could not believe that such or such a gift was intended for our portion, and so have let it pass by; did not put forth even our hands to take it.

Just here is the difficulty. In the perplexities of life, how are we going to know what is meant for us, — what we should refuse, and what we should accept?

Ah, sad and foolish heart ! not to know that we are neither to choose nor refuse aught of Providence — be it of evil or of good, of joy or of sorrow : It is He, who is to supply all our wants ; it is He who is to provide all things and events. *We* know not what is needful for us. We cannot look from the beginning, to the end of life, and so select as to what would be for our advantage, or our happiness. We are incapable of this ; being, in respect to the future, entirely in the dark. Why, then, should we be choosing, or refusing, this or that, as it may be sent ? No : we cannot be the choosers, and should not, either, be the refusers. He who bestows the one, knows also if the other be necessary ; and therefore both one and the other can only be left to Him.

But we do, and have done, this ; and thence comes all our trouble. We have let opportunities slip, when we might, perchance, quietly have received God's gifts, and so have enjoyed abundant blessings. But here again comes the difficulty. We *thought* we were doing right, so and so : we dared not take what we felt, maybe, was too much or too great for us, — that it could not really be so designed, so intended. We were *faithless* ; did not improve the opportunity as we might have done ; and thus the blessing passed by, — could not stay.

As it is, however, an actual truth that God supplies our needs, and that He alone can do so, will not these opportunities come again? and shall we not again have the power to possess those blessings?

It would be but a hard and dry answer to say, that the precise same can never recur; conditions and circumstances being ever changed. Instead, for compensation and satisfaction, we can only turn to the maxims and principles of the Christian faith; and here they reveal themselves in all their value,—That God overrules all, even our faults and our errors; and that to those who “love him,” however dark and circuitous may be the way, he makes *all things* to work together for their good,—the *best* good to which they can attain.

What, then, shall we do but follow this simple lesson?—take no thought, no anxiety, for the morrow; and as to that, not even for the present moment. Suffer no perplexities; because receiving and living each hour on what God supplies, be it for the body or the soul; have no cares as to whether this or that was designed for us, if Providence puts it in our way.

Let us learn this lesson before it be quite too late; before life is passed, and the opportunities

gone by which we might have profited by it. Let us live on God's will and God's bounty each hour ; considering not if we are to *reject* or *choose*. Then may we come at length into that simple reliance upon God ; letting our mind, heart, and soul expand and unfold as He provides or allows nourishment for them, day by day. Then shall we be in a state of peace, and in the place and position which God designs for us ; living in him and by him ; submitting all our wills to his.

Does it seem hard to make the effort for this ; to bring ourselves into this condition ? Then should we think nothing about it. But let us remember that other precept and promise of Jesus : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Let us go about doing God's work, promoting his kingdom : then may we safely leave all to Him who will not fail to provide for *His own laborers*, and will pay them sufficiently in all things suitable, without their anxious forethought. So may we " cast all our care upon *Him, who careth for us.*"





## XIV.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S VIEW OF DEATH.

HOW is the Christian to view for himself, and his friends, that event which comes alike to all, and from which there is no appeal on this side the grave? Is he to brace up his mind against it, as did the ancient heathen, with all philosophical fortitude and self-reliance, as an event of inevitable necessity, and that therefore he must even bear it as well as he can?

Christianity has done away with that far-sought stoicism of former times. It has put other things in its place: it has brought life and immortality to light, revealing a world still living, existing, beyond this. It has cherished in our hearts simple obedience to and acquiescence in God's will, a humble trust and faith, and a communion of spirits: so that one who is gone before is not *dead* to us, but *sleepeth*.

There must ever be pain and deep gloom

when one with whom we have been connected in the closest ties, is parted from us ; and we see his form no more in our homes, by the fireside, and by the ways where we had been accustomed to walk, to labor, or to refresh ourselves together, — be it of a dear parent, child, brother or sister, or of a friend nearer or more remote. These are kindred ties ; for we are all human, bound together by one life, humanity : and that which snaps the cord in one, makes vibrate the same in the heart of another ; when one is taken, all the members suffer. It is, in a family, as if tearing limb from limb. This being *Nature*, we suffer deeply and painfully, for a time, it may be, for long.

But there is no harm, that is, wrong-doing, in this suffering, — within reasonable limits. It is well that we do suffer : we believe it was so designed, *that our hearts might still reach forward unto them*. By the intensity of feeling that *we cannot let them go*, our minds, following, clinging to them, are carried forward into the very presence where they are. Our spirits thus dwell with them, are raised up with them, as it were, into heaven ; until we can come calmly back, — sustained by the sense and realization of a *living* communion with them still, — to go on in our accustomed work and sphere.

We believe that this natural gloom and sorrow

were intended also, as a necessary chastening of our hearts, to interrupt the continued flow of gay and outward prosperity; and that, for the time being, it should have its way, — that is, that it should not be driven or banished *forcibly* from our minds, but should have its course, seeking for quiet, seclusion, reflection, seriousness. From this pensiveness it is, too, that we turn naturally to the *mourning-dress*. All that is quieting, subduing, in sympathy with and in likeness to our bereavement, alone harmonizes with it, and aids us in that very frame of mind which it was intended to create. By the constant association of the outward garb with the inward affliction, our sorrow and chastening are gently kept in remembrance; when otherwise, the usual display of gayety or colors, might, perchance, help to make us forget — in the accustomed round of circumstances — sooner than would be for our good, the suffering and privation we have borne. We know that there are some who make no change, and think, perhaps, that it is more consonant with Christianity, not to express thus a sorrow for the departed. But these few are exceptional cases: and such minds, no doubt, can well sustain themselves, and suffer no loss; for underneath there also, is an *abiding* “faith,” and one which wins a certain Christian sympathy, and admiration.

But, in general, the world *as it is*, we believe, needs this *shading*; that many hearts, habitually surrounded by its glare and excitements, require this *mourn-ful* reminder, to deepen and make permanent the impressions of affliction; that the sincerely bereaved also require it for protection, — that society may know at a glance the chastening they have received, and avoid any rude and jostling contact; — in short, that the community, like a picture of art in its deep shadows and contrasts, is “toned” and subdued in sentiment and manner, by the quietness and graveness of the mourning-dress.

Thus this tendency, or instinct, appears to us providentially designed; and to be simply, naturally, cherished, an appropriate length of time, for our best good; and we would not consider it *anti-Christian*, as connecting gloom with death. Black, to our mind, as commonly and reasonably worn, is not “gloom,” but graveness and seriousness; and death, in its outward aspect, *is* grave and serious. It is the rending of Nature; and Nature, as we all know, must suffer.

But to the Christian, the outward aspect — Nature — is not all. He must accept that, abide by that, suffer from that, as all others do, only in a more chastened way; but beyond the outward, beyond Nature, rises to him the Spiritual

in all its fulness. He has lost in the body, but he has gained in the spirit. Every friend whom he has loved and cherished here, when departed to another world, opens to him more and more of heaven. The more, spiritual visions rise upon the sight, as in the repeated losses of friend after friend, a more continuing consciousness prevails, of nearness to, and connection with, the unseen world ; brighter and brighter become the glimpses of that, in which there is no "variable-ness, nor shadow of turning."

And does he look forward to that change for *himself*, without fear or dread? Ah! besides the drawings and leadings of those who have gone before, has he not cherished in himself the thought that he should one day be with God, and "see Him as He is"? Has there not gathered to his mind, year by year, a greater illumination around that throne of God and the Lamb ; a deeper thought and significance of the peace and blissfulness of that heavenly state, — all blessedness, a fulfilled and happy life ; all knowing as we are known, and loving as we are loved ; all, spontaneously, doing rightly, truly, and happily, — just as they should do ; and each of those whom we would have cherished here, uniting with us in all peace, good will, and joy? Yes : those whom we would wish to have gone with

here, — but could not, — there will be open and undisguised to us ; joining hand in hand in all holy, happy, and blessed ways.

Thus, although in the midst of health and present joys, there might be some “natural shrinking;” and he might not desire to hasten the moment which would carry him from the tried and wonted, to the new and untried ; but is content to stay and do the work which is allotted to him here, as long as life may last ; yet, as the time approaches, the Christian mind can but look with calmness and peace, upon the way and scenes which are before. There is a Strength which is made perfect in his weakness ; an outstretched Arm which bears him up ; a joyful Hand which beckons him on ; a living Voice which thrills and cheers him, — “Well done, good and faithful servant ! enter into thy rest, — My rest, — enter thou into the joy of thy LORD !”



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PART II.

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I.

THE REWARD OF HEAVEN

THERE is a certain class of minds which revolt at any mention of future "reward," in a religious sense : as if, — in the looking forward to such, — there were something unworthy and derogatory : as if human beings were alone to do stern battle for the right and duty, without ever casting a "longing, lingering look," for what may be beyond. But have such minds ever been truly tried, and merged in the deepest struggles of life ; when frequently pain after pain succeeds, continuously ; as if there were indeed to be no respite for one, on this side of the grave ? Have the sorrows which cleave and cut into the soul, — laying it prostrate upon the rack of earthly hopelessness and desolation, — ever been theirs by sad reality ? Or have their troubles been only, as it were, imaginary ; upon the surface ; easily assuaged ; thus readily giving place to other quick-following thoughts and emotions ? — for with such,

a stern stoicism may readily be adopted, whenever need seems to be ; as whatever is but superficial, can be voluntarily and easily borne.

But when the spirit is wounded with deep grief ; and we look forward and backward, but there is no relief ; to the right hand and left, but all is shut in and dark ; and downward, but no hold is discovered, — is not then the looking *above*, towards heaven, where a clear light is shining, *designed* to be our refuge ? And can the Christian then look forward to the peace, purity, and joy of the heavenly state, without a cheering thought that they shall one day be his ; that there “ *doth* remain a rest for the people of God ; ” that there, with Jesus, he shall be redeemed and sanctified, with no earthliness of affection or desire disturbing and troubling him ; but all shall be satisfied : All hopes that were broken or disappointed here, shall there be filled out in all their meaning ; and the life of heavenly beauty, love, and peace, — which was so ardently longing to open itself here, — shall there be met, and receive its full development and exercise.

We might endeavor to deny ourselves any such gleam of anticipation from another world ; and go firmly on — confining ourselves to the cares and duties of this — simply because it was our *duty* so to do : but we believe, that, in spite of ourselves, those rays would come unbidden, here and there ;

sent by God himself, to break through and light up the gloom : for the *instinct* of the soul requires this ; Heaven being its home, a streaming ray must come now and then from that home, to beckon and allure it on.

We would not misinterpret those persons, who thus reject every thought of "reward" in the future, as unworthy of the dignity and high spirit of mankind. We believe their idea simply is, that we should do what is right, good, or religious, because it *is* so ; and not for the *sake* of "reward." Thus far they are right ; and every genuine Christian, or child of God, feels and acts, on this principle. His life is "hid with Christ in God ;" and God's will is his will, — as far as human weakness and infirmities allow ; and what is good and right is the very life of his soul, — because that is God's life ; and he does what is good, right, and religious, not *for the sake* of the happiness to be obtained now or hereafter, but because it is the law of God and of truth that he should so do, and in that only is true life : and he can no longer be in harmony but with that which is right and true. He does not make the future, or any present bliss and peace, the *condition* of his living truly and religiously ; but nevertheless, amid the environments of life, he has an *intuition*, as it were, to look forward to it — as an incitement and encouragement by the

way,—and sometimes as a *necessary* support, in the midst of trouble and bereavement.

But where it appears to us such minds are in error, is in overlooking, discarding, annihilating, as it were, an *instinct* of our existence, — a certain instinct which pervades all our being, — accompanying us from the beginning of life, to its end. Even a child will persevere through a hard lesson or a tedious task, for the pleasure that is to come afterwards, with “papa” or “mamma,” “brother” or “sister.” “Children of a larger growth,” will often, indeed, — for the love of it, or for the present pleasure, — study laboriously ; or employ themselves industriously ; but this would be but a limited, and it might be deemed almost, a selfish enjoyment, if it ended there, — if there were not lying underneath some intuitive sense, or consciousness of responsibility in regard to their *future*, — that it is essential now, in youth, to be preparing for useful membership of society hereafter. In truth, such a consciousness, and such a sense of responsibility, alone give superiority and bright promise, to youth and early manhood.

What is it that impels men to establish themselves in business, but this instinct of the future, — the necessity of providing for *their own comfort and happiness*, in preparing for those who will be dependent upon them ? Is it not the *home*, which most persons hope to possess, which allures them

onward to a worthy, and manly life? Is it not for the pleasure she will have on their return, and the gratification she will bestow on those she loves, that a woman oftentimes is nerved, in their absence, to go through with uncounted cares; and, in the training of her family, is she not ever looking forward to their *future* good?

Is it simply the having something to do, that inspires the literary, and the scientific man? or is it not rather the desire to be useful to the world, and to future generations, that they seek to hand down their labors to posterity? Is it not the natural, impelling motive to all in general, — rich and poor, high and low, — to do that which may *better* their condition in one respect or another, outwardly, or inwardly? and, in fact, if we have not this motive, are we not like the base, or uncivilized, — living only in the present? What is the essential difference between the enlightened man and the savage, but this, — that the latter has no forethought, no forecasting, no providence for the future? And how is a man raised above his fellows in a noble manhood, but by this very “forethought,” “providence,” and “responsibility”?

Thus all these have their “reward,” — the reward of comfortable homes; of stored and cultivated minds; of improved fortunes; of kindly and attached friends: and surely it is for the improvement and dignity of the character, thus to throw

one's self—somewhat at least,—not to overtax and burden the mind with care and anxiety—into the future ; going on, as it were, with a pervading, intuitive consciousness of its importance.

A further illustration: May we not suppose that a long day's labor of the thousands of humble poor, would be doubly—trebly—infinately—lightened, with a joyful buoyancy at their heart,—had they the promise of a cheerful assembling, and an excellent repast, at the end? Would they be lowered and degraded in the scale of being, from possessing an alacrity *so* inspired? It would be right, indeed, for them to work patiently and steadily, were there nothing of the kind to look forward to. But with their whole mind expanded with this joy of anticipation, and imagination of the good things in store for them, may we not believe, and perceive, that a happy stimulus must be given to their tasked faculties ; and that under such influence, their whole being must become more elastic, and therefore capable, at least, if not more worthy? And would we conceive that there would be any thing false, or wrong, in such promise held out: on the contrary, would it not be perfectly legitimate for them, and for those from whom it came,—even raising,—elevating,—each, in the moral scale, the one for its glad reception, and the other for its beneficent action?

Are, then, the religious character and affections

alone, to be without their inciting, and stimulating influences? Does not this instinct—intuition—of looking forward, run through the whole being of man,—body, mind, and soul? Must he not, for the full and rightful development of each, be mindful of the future good, peculiar to each?

We grant, that the higher the pursuit, the more absorbing is the interest and satisfaction in the thing itself; and therefore the less, extraneous influence is needed, to encourage one on: and therefore the Soul, with its high objects of virtue, truth, and religion, can in general be satisfied and happy just in the pursuit and practice of those things,—because they are its *life*. Nevertheless, there come times in all human experience when nought but the promises of heaven can sustain; a period when one must “go through the wine-press” and “*alone* ;” moments when nothing earthly can avail, and we can only reach forth unto God, unto Jesus, unto the spirits of the just made perfect: when our eyes and hearts must be lifted upwards, and we see, as it were, face to face, the things that *shall be*; and in a vision behold “the King in his beauty;” and “a realm where all those aspirations which have beckoned us only to crown us still with thorns, shall be realized; and where there is no bud which shall not burst into blossom, and no blossom which shall fall, without being filled into fruit.”

The more the soul becomes elevated, the more is its sensitiveness to the darkness and imperfections of this world increased: so the more must its appreciation and sense of the heavenly world, its destination, be ever increasing. Therefore, confining ourselves exclusively to the present moment, — in whatever may be its character, whether of mind, body, or soul, — we apprehend is an impossibility, as against those instincts of Nature which, we have seen, are implanted within us; and against the intuitions of the soul itself. We must indeed, in the present, do “with our might whatever our hands find to do;” that is, with efficiency and all necessary attention. But as God has opened to us other fountains from which to draw, — *spiritual revelations of a future state*, by which our souls may become enlarged and refreshed, — whoever, we believe, shuts himself off from these, must become dwarfed and arid, in his moral, or spiritual growth.

It appears to us, therefore, a misapprehension, and an erroneous outcry against those who hold out the blessedness of the future *reward* or *end* of this earthly pilgrimage; as well as the fear of future punishment; — for what is true of a final “reward,” completion, or fulfilment of expectations, is conversely true of the fear of pain, or

punishment. Both being *natural* to humanity,—that is, being principles implanted in our nature, by God himself,—they cannot be valueless there, but must be legitimate persuasions to be made use of: some characters being more drawn and affected by the one, and others by the other influence. What we have to regard, it is true, is, that we do not abuse these. It would be an abuse of them to make them the only, or perhaps the principal, motive and appeal. This it is, no doubt, which makes both heart and soul in a true manhood shrink from such — *sole* — representations: as we feel within ourselves, in general, the nobleness of doing right, because it is right; of loving God because he loves us; of pleasing and obeying him,—not that we may escape punishment, in this life or the other; or have the reward of happiness, in *themselves*, but—because it is proper and right, so to conduct.

Yet undoubtedly, with many very true Christians, this reward and fear,—which should be but modifying influences,—have, from the inadequacy and imperfectness of human language; or their own inability critically to distinguish, come to mix themselves with,—to take the place of,—the very end itself, of our motives and endeavors, namely, TO BE LIKE GOD. But that which even the simplest Christian conceives at heart of the

“reward of heaven,” is not a low idea merely of the happiness he shall possess ; but of purity, of freedom from sin and error ; of resemblance to God, being perfected in the image of Christ : and fear of punishment, or hell, in his mind, is also a sense of banishment from God ; of being an outcast from holiness, and consequently a prey to the horrors and remorse of an evil conscience. With all who have been truly, spiritually, converted to God, no doubt these are the true meanings in their minds, however unable they may be to express them otherwise than simply as “reward” and “punishment.”

These simplest forms of expression, however, are legitimate ; as is implied by St. Paul when he alludes to the crown of righteousness which was “laid up for him,” which the Lord would give him *in that day* ; and not to him only, but to all who loved his appearing. We know what that “crown,” that “reward,” embraced in his mind. It was the “breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

St. Paul says, too, of the Saviour, that He, for the *reward that was set before him*, endured the cross, despising the shame, and was now *sat down at the right hand of God*. That reward consisted, *in having fulfilled the will of the Father* concerning man’s redemption ; and in re-

turning to the bosom of His glory to be *one with him*.

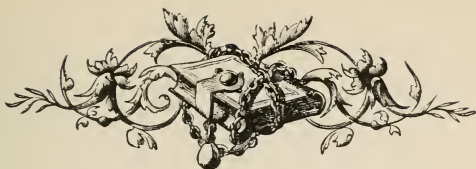
The legitimacy of this appeal to spiritual reward and punishment is also sanctioned by the Lord himself in such passages as these: "Fear not them which kill the body . . . but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, . . . and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your *reward is great in heaven*." "In this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you," — that ye possess miraculous power, great capacity, intellect, influence, — "but rather rejoice *because your names are written in heaven*." And is not this consummation associated with the very essence of the Christian religion; and, indeed, inseparable from it?

Whoever, then, disclaim such appeals, as unworthy of the dignity of man, in their efforts to move, persuade, or dissuade others, must, it would seem, be putting out of their hands great and powerful aids, — those elements or principles implanted in human nature, — of fear or dread, and of hope or anticipation. Unmindful of *natural* facts, one cannot be truly philosophical; nor a moral "reformer," in a correct sense of the word.

The preacher, — in his province of spiritual

things,—can alone be guided by the spiritual revelations vouchsafed in the Bible, and by the Holy Spirit ; and by his sense of duty and faithfulness, when to appeal to one or the other influence,—when to *bear*, or when to “*forbear*.”





## II.

### SUNDAY.

FAR over the water,\* comes the sound of the church-bells—soft, dreamily, sweet: but not more melodious than when, in the midst of the full streets, we are walking along in company, to the House of God on this day,—Day of all the days in the week. How thrillingly does their peal then burst upon the heart, gladdening it in every pulse and vein! Not like other music, intellectual, artistic; but, appealing to the body as well as to the soul and mind, it touches every nerve and sensation of the *whole* man,—seizing upon him, absorbing him in an entire Christian joy and satisfaction,—that of *suggestion* and *association*. This call of the church-bells on Sunday morning, suggests to us, reminds us of, the things that are to occupy this day, of our highest spiritual peace and good; and associates us in sympathy, with the multitude

\* Written on an island, three miles from town.

going the same way, animated by the same spirit. How different the crowd thus thronging to church, from any other! — calm, peaceful, orderly, in their best dispositions and subdued minds; hearts turned, for this one hour at least, towards heaven rather than earth. Joyous then, indeed, to the Christian, is this music, and this occasion; summoning the worshippers to church, to join in the praises and worship, of God and the Lamb.

To be able thus to go in quiet to the Sabbath sanctuary, responding to this glad summons, is one of the purest of earthly enjoyments, — ay, it is heavenly! It is a mingling of the spiritual with the earthly; bringing a heavenly element into these houses of wood and stone, — material and transient, as they are, — and uttering there a divine worship, which is *eternal* in its sentiment and influence; thus filling these structures with a living and holy presence, and exhaling it thence as a sweet odor unto heaven.

This sabbath hour and divine worship, are thus a little foretaste of heaven, — calm, pure, of the things of God and of the Spirit. God abides there, because, wherever the human soul strives to lift itself towards him, there he more entirely vouchsafes his presence.

This Sunday service, too, in its influence upon the week, is like the hour of prayer in the still early morning — before commences the work of

the day,—refreshing, invigorating, settling to the soul; putting it in its right atmosphere, and right place. He who neglects those morning aspirations,—even are they but of a moment,—sets his soul adrift, as it were; it is but launching upon the sea without rudder or compass: so he that neglects the influence of the sabbath, but loses, as it were, the very rudder of his life. It is on this quiet, peaceful day, set apart for the purpose, that we are to store our minds and souls, not only with a snatch or two—such as may be obtained in the midst of daily affairs,—but with a full meal, whole draughts of spiritual life and comfort. The spiritual activity we then exercise, and the religious instruction to which we apply our minds, set our souls forward for another week in strength and growth; just as the daily recurring physical meal, strengthens our bodies for the hours and labors of the day: and thus the weekly recurring Sunday, carries us onward in true spiritual life.

Is it not a vain objection which is sometimes brought forward against this—as it is called—“spasmodic religion,” that we should be always *spiritually-minded*; that no day should be considered more “religious,” than another?

True, we are always to be “spiritually-minded;” and we are also always to be strong in body: but this can only be by resorting regularly, not only

to *food*, but to *meals*, — repasts, — which are the chief means for supplying and regulating the physical health and strength; and the more regular the meals, the more assured is that strength. Nothing is more deleterious to health and vigor of body, than a desultory mode of living — eating and drinking in any manner, at any hour. Indeed, such irregularity is the almost certain precursor of derangement, disease, and death.

Just so the order and instructions of the Sabbath are the religious, God-given means — the “meals,” the repasts of the soul — for the spiritual health; that the spirit may be active, strong, and living, through all the otherwise, busy, week-day work: and he who is indifferent, neglectful, or voluntarily irregular, in the observance of these, can expect no assured religious strength, enlightenment, or peace; but, on the contrary, he may be presumed to be faint, languishing, dubious, — in his religious character and work.

Undoubtedly it was from the essential nature or absolute necessity of this day of rest for the body, and of religious observance for the mind, that it was placed and enjoined among those strictly moral commandments — originally given to the Hebrews, — but not for them alone. Reason tells us that they were for the whole world and for all time; that they are as fundamental

to every individual of the human race at this day, and ever will be so, as they were to the Jews of old. Then why separate this one of the sabbath, the one day in seven,—from all the rest,—and consider it to be abrogated, effete, done away with?

True, in Christianity the day was changed from the last to the first day of the week, for a special reason,—to make it also a memorial day of the risen Lord. It was no abrogation of a “sabbath day” as such. Our Lord kept the sabbath. He went into the synagogues, (corresponding with our parish churches,) and preached. He protested not against the sabbath, but against its abuse; and the superstitious subservience of the Pharisees to it, instead of *its* subservience to the *necessary* use of man.

The apostles kept the sabbath: although, as was said, this was changed by them from the last to the first day of the week—the latter alone being introduced to the Gentile converts,—which we all are. The Christian Church, for eighteen centuries, has uniformly kept the same,—a day of rest; of change from week-day labor; and of religious worship and instruction.

God commanded, in His laws through Moses, that even the very beasts of burden should have their sabbath,—the day of rest. And what intelligent, humane owner of cattle, at this day,

would not desire that they should possess it ; and his “men-servants” and “maid-servants” also,—perceiving that it is a necessity for them, as well as for his own good, from their service ; that without it, in continued labor, they droop, and, if carried to an extreme, will die ? \*

Thus we may believe that it was in the economy of nature, of Divine providence and grace, that the ordinance of the sabbath was placed among the moral laws, as one of equal necessity to be obeyed. Even in the lowest view of it—that of the body—is thus seen the necessity of this respite from labor, to regain and recover the flagging strength ; and in regard to the mind, although “every day” should be honestly, uprightly spent, yet this can be effectually secured but by a *recuperation* of the *spirit* also,—by a fixed time set apart, when the world or business—quiet and at rest,—leaves leisure for meditation, reflection, religious study, worship,—which imbues the whole man, and exalts his tone and purpose throughout the week.

\* In the abolition of “Sunday,” in the old French Revolution, it was soon found that even the animals could not sustain the uninterrupted labor. And, from a recent notice in a public print, of a late English work on Labor (by Hon. Mr. Brassey, M.P.), the writer copies these items, . . . “The number of working-hours, . . . was found to be an important element. . . . The French artisan works seven days in the week, and never does a really good day’s work. . . . Sunday labor is always, economically, a mistake.”

The soul that does not take these special seasons of calmness and tranquillity, to think upon or "feel" after God, and its spiritual life, will derive much less force or fervor from the religious thoughts that will come to it from time to time, amid the hurry, din, and bustle of daily business and care: for the soul cannot ignore itself; more vital than the body, it makes its existence felt even in the midst of the busy week-day world. And God requires this: he requires us to give HIM our hearts at all times, through the week as well as on Sundays. If, however, we not do this in a serious and voluntary manner when occasion presents, it is no "doing" it at all: it is simply letting him take what he can get in a thought or aspiration here and there, which may or may not flow in upon us unawares, just as it happens; but merely such, is neither religion, worship, nor true spiritual life.

To give up, therefore, the sabbath and fixed habits and opportunities of religious thought and purpose, is against all religion,\* all true philosophy, and analogy. How far astray, then, must it be, to preach the abandonment or levelling of the Sunday, that all days, as is said, may be *equally* religious, — not "one above another."

\* We may say literally "all" religion; for even the very heathen and half-civilized nations have their fixed times of religious worship.

The fundamental idea — in part — is correct, but the *mode* is wrong. That is, all days *should* be equally “religious,” in the interior sense of the word ; honest, upright and truthful, and lived to the “glory of God ;” but to make them so, our idea is, that means must undoubtedly be employed, as in all things else. To bring the other six days of the week up to the religious instruction and keeping of the Sunday, would be against Nature, (and therefore the providence of God), which requires the intermediate time to provide for its corporeal wants ; and the thousand and one affairs that come into human life, — arts, sciences, recreation, business of all kinds ; and, moreover, Nature is not capable of being held up to the point of continuous attention to any one thing, and that the highest of all, the spiritual. And to reduce Sunday to the other days, as one of them, would be, as we have seen, depriving Nature, occupied as it daily is in necessary affairs, of its essential respite from labor ; \* and of the opportunity for that copious supply of spiritual food

\* It is stated in a Life of Wilberforce, that an intimate friend and companion of his, also a member of Parliament, and, like himself, ardent and indefatigable in the antislavery cause, in the course of a few years sickened and died. Unlike Wilberforce, who religiously kept the Sunday, his friend never gave himself that “day of rest,” but labored on with the same assiduity. And it was to this that Wilberforce attributed the early exhaustion of his powers, and his consequent death.

which nourishes the soul, and thus keeps the human being from sinking down to "the beasts which perish."

An advocacy, therefore, of the levelling of the sabbath, appears to us to ignore the human constitution and its actual needs of change, — alternate work and refreshment, activity and repose ; and this of both kinds, spiritual as well as natural, natural as well as spiritual : and instead, therefore, of being a sound practical wisdom, such seems to betray a want of insight, of true perception and judgment of the harmony of things ; and thus, it appears to us, it can only be a "blind" leading of the "blind."

But this has been done in the name of "religion." Men, — but a few we will believe, — whose names have been high in the community, have placed, and do at this day still place, their hand and seal to meetings, conventions, and resolutions, for breaking up the Christian sabbath ; in other words, abolishing Sunday as a religiously-devoted institution, from our Christian civilization.

Ah, frail human nature ! ever ready to set itself up to instruct, in the place of God's simple intuitions, and the teachings of His divine revelations ! What humble soul, on the contrary, is there, in which one ray of the Spirit of God has penetrated — to awaken into true spiritual life, —

but knows by instinct the essential necessity, for its own good, of moments of thought, prayer, and repose ; and of observing, in a religious manner, the Sabbath ?





### III.

#### MEMORIAL DAYS.

HOW refreshing is the breaking in upon the week-day labors, of an hour in the house of God, at morning or evening Service!

It is no doubt well that cathedrals and great central churches should be constantly open to the passing traveller, and in the midst of the great thoroughfares, — with daily prayer, — for those who will steal a moment, from their hours of business. But in the ordinary parish churches, for week-day service, it seems to us, opening them on the memorial, or saints' days, is the simple, happy medium. Being out of the usual routine, — that is, occurring but occasionally, and sometimes unexpectedly, as it were, (unless one is in constant consultation with the Calendar, or Prayer Book), — they fall with peculiar unction upon the spirit; and are something to win us, during the week, away from engrossing

worldly occupations ; and to keep the mind to a religious tone.

How much do they lose who make no such commemoration, of those, to whom we owe the first dissemination of the principles of our holy religion ! With what a realizing sense of those men and of their doctrines, do we not become impressed, when we turn to the Lessons or Gospel for the day, — where a distinct topic is brought up relating to those sainted dead of so many centuries ago, — of how they were called by Jesus ; or how they were led to follow him ; or how they sometimes doubted, and sometimes denied him ; or how they were ready to offer even their lives for his sake !

And on the days of the Blessed Virgin,\* if we may, perchance, hear in a simple lecture of her gentleness, purity, and faith ; and meek submissiveness to the Divine Will, — how does not this come like a sweet fragrance over the spirit !

Also on the day of St. Michael and all Angels, when we read in the specified lessons of the angel who met Jacob, and with whom he wrestled until break of day ; and of the supernatural being who appeared to Daniel, yet was like unto the sons of men ; and of the angel who entered

\* There are two days connected with the Virgin Mary, in our American Church, — the Annunciation ; and the Purification, or Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

the prison of Peter, and smote off his chains, saying to him, "Arise up quickly," and then — "Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals:" and led him through the first and second ward, unto the gate, which opened before them; and they went out of the prison quarters; and passed on through one street of the city: then the angel disappeared, Peter all the while thinking it was a "vision" (so it was a *vision*; but not less the *spiritual* reality also — who can doubt it? — of an angel from heaven), — when all these visions of the spiritual beings of another world — in their ethereal perfectness and loveliness, majesty and calm peace, come before the mind, — bringing to us the realities of the unseen life, — is it not *something*, in the midst of absorbing earthly interests, to have them burst upon our sight; thus mingling, with these lower scenes, the purities and radiances of heaven?

To many minds, however, this observance of the "days of the saints," although but in simple religious service, savors of "superstition." But is it superstition, merely to remember the holy dead, of other ages or generations? What would be the present condition of society, had it not remembered the lives of good, which have long since passed away? did it not hold in affectionate reverence, names which have been as beacon lights, in all times of the world's experience?

Because in church a few passages of their history are read, — and they are at best but few which the Scriptures record, — and because the names of those saints and martyrs of olden time, are breathed forth in connection with a simple prayer, that their faith, hope, patience, perseverance, and holy life and example, may be ours, — must the performance of such simple service, necessarily, be deemed “superstitious”?

To pray to the saints and to canonize them, — as in the Roman church ; to make them a shield, interposing them between us and Deity ; placing them as a substitute, in a measure, for the one all-sufficient Saviour, — it is to be allowed, savors not only of “superstition,” but is a gross and deleterious error. This is the *abuse*, and not the healthful use, of the observance. That portion of the Protestant-catholic church, the Anglican and Anglo-American, which venerates the holy apostles and martyrs in days of commemoration, are guarded against such an error, in the fixed simplicity of that commemoration. Merely the religious service of the Sunday, with an appropriate additional collect or two, and reading from the Scriptures those chapters or passages which contain allusions to those who are thus commemorated, — is such simple service to be deemed inappropriate? Or is it the *religious* dead alone, who are to be forgotten?

What literary, musical, poetical, or patriotic club but has its anniversaries of its great men,—its Burns; its Beethoven; its Shakspeare; its Washington? And even lesser names than these are *fêted*; and in our modern times almost apotheosized, by the world. What academy, college, or fraternity of any description, but thus keeps in honored remembrance its great and worthy ones? And not alone in such memorials, but in art,—in pictures, and sculpture,—their living influence is made present, and enduring.

Shall the world and society thus hold in veneration their noble dead, and the Church alone be debarred from memorializing *its* immortal ones; the pioneers in its service; those who bore the weight of conflict in its struggling days, and so nobly and well,—so bravely and faithfully,—that they were able to leave to us for all time, the inheritance which they thus conquered? Such men as Stephen, who, filled with the Holy Ghost, even in the midst of a violent death, was yet radiant in countenance with a divine, visible glory. Such men as were all the apostles,—the immortal twelve who knew our blessed Saviour face to face,—who counted not their lives dear unto them; but ceased not to maintain publicly, the faith of the Lord Jesus, though they knew that bonds and imprisonments awaited them; and each of whom, as far as we know,—all but one, and

he in banishment and exile on a lonely island, — died as martyrs to His cause, and for *our* church of to-day, — died by the cross, the scourge, the rack. Men whose souls were so filled with divine love, that neither height nor depth, principalities nor powers, nor any creature, — in this world or the world to come, — could separate them from it. And Paul, who came after, — but following in their steps? In the words of another, “what weight did he not cast aside, to run the race that was set before him? What tie of home or nation did he not break, that he might join in one the whole family of God?”

“For forty years the scoff of synagogues, and the outcast of his people, he forgot the privations of the exile in the labors of the missionary; flying from charges of sedition, he disseminated the principles of peace; persecuted from city to city, he yet created in each a centre of pure worship and Christian civilization, and along the coasts of Asia, and colonies of Macedonia, and citadels of Greece, dropped link after link of the great chain of truth that shall yet embrace the world. Amid the joy of making converts, he had also the affliction of making martyrs; to witness the sufferings, perhaps to bear the reproaches, of survivors; with weeping heart to rebuke the fears, and sustain the faith, of many a doubter; and in solitude and bonds to send forth the effusions of his earnest spirit to

quicken the life, and renovate the gladness, of the confederate churches. Yet when did speculation, at its ease, ever speak with vigor so noble, and cheerfulness so fresh, as his glorious letters ; which recount his perils by land and by sea, his sorrows with friend and foe, and declared that ‘none of those things move’ him ; which show him projecting incessant work, yet ready for instant rest ; conscious that already he has fought the good fight, and willing to finish his course, and resign the field ; but prepared, if needs be, to grasp again the sword of the Spirit, and go forth in quest of wider victories ?

“. . . We follow Paul through his vicissitudes, and feel an idle pride in his most conspicuous adventures ; and when he stretches forth the hand, and speaks before King Agrippa ; when idolaters mistake the bearer of a godlike message for a god, and bow before him as to Mercury ; when in Ephesus he becomes the rival to Diana, and ruins the craftsmen of silver shrines ; when philosophy listens to him on Areopagus, and the Furies still slumber within hearing in their grove, — we vainly think that he derives his greatest dignity from the scenes in the midst of which he stands, a contrast and a stranger.

“As we would deserve the Christian name, let us look more deeply into his mission, and adopt more fully the spirit of his mind. Watch him

even in Rome, where he dwelt, though a prisoner, in his own hired house ; and where shall we seek for him in that dazzling metropolis ? He was not one to pass through its scenes of magnificence with stupid and fanatic indifference, to find himself surrounded by the monuments of ancient freedom, and listen for the first time to the very language of the world's conquerors, without catching the inspiration of history, feeling the solemn shadow of the past fall upon him. I do not say that he never paused beneath the senate-house to think of the voices that had been heard within its walls ; or climbed the Capitol, once the palace of the republic, now its shrine ; or started at the fasces, stern emblem of a justice now no more ; or went without excitement into the imperial presence, through the very gardens where his own blood shall hereafter be shed in merriment. But his daily walks passed all these splendors by : they dived into the lanes and suburbs on which no glory of history is shed, and which made Rome the sink and curse, while it was the ruler, of the nations ; they found the haunts of the scorned Hebrew ; they startled the degraded revels of the slave ; they sought out the poor foreigner, attracted by the city's wealth, and perishing amidst its desolation ; they crept to the pallet on which fever and poverty were stretched, tendering the hand of restoration, and whispering the lessons

of peace. This was his noblest dignity ; not that he publicly pleaded before princes, but that he secretly solaced the outcast and the friendless ; not that he paced the Forum, but that he lingered in the dens of wretchedness, and refreshed the hardened heart with gentle sympathies, and linked the alien with the fraternity of men, and dropped upon the darkest lot the spirit of Providence and of hope. . . .

“ If Paul had cowered before the tribunal of Nero, and trembled at his comrades’ blood, and, instead of baring his neck to the imperial sword, had purchased by poor evasions another year of life, where would that year have been now ? — a lost drop in the deep waters of time ; yet not lost, but rather mingled as a poison in the refreshing stream of good men’s goodness by which Providence fertilizes the ages. . . .

“ And what is true of this great apostle is true of the religion which he spread, and which we profess. Its true dignity is, that, unseen, it has ever gone about doing good. Link after link has it struck from the chain of every human thralldom ; error after error has it banished ; pain after pain has it driven from body or from mind ; and so silently has the blessing come, that (like the lame whom Peter made to walk) ‘ he that was healed wist not who it was.’ . . .

“ Amid all the splendors of miracle, nothing

could be more unostentatious than the diffusion of Christ's mercy by its missionaries in the days of old. Beginning at the provinces of Palestine, it passed from village to village of the interior, from city to city of the vast empire's various coast; along the shores of Asia, beneath the citadels of Greece, to the world's great palace on the Tiber, it stole along, fleet and silent as the wind, that bloweth where it listeth, sweeping through every foul recess, and leaving health where it found pestilence."\*

Shall this religion, after these many centuries since of the same sublime success, — having scattered its seeds over every part of the civilized globe; and planted there its Christian institutions, of every species of benevolence and reform, — shall it discard from public observance those devoted, but humble men, — that apostolic band — who sowed its seeds, and watered its growth with their own blood; who, through ignominy, scorn, and contempt, established by God's grace, the Christian faith, on a sure footing

\* The author having opportunely met with the above graphic and eloquent extracts while writing this article, could not resist making use of them entire, — so apposite are they to the text and subject, — and thus enriching these pages with so noble and appreciative a tribute to Christianity and its Founders, by one who, however, on religious *doctrines*, has been on a different standpoint from our own, — the English Professor, James Martineau, formerly Unitarian clergyman; in *Endeavors after the Christian Life*, First Series, pp. 84-6, 224-6.

in the world,—those men, the only immediate link we have with our Lord and Master's earthly career,—shall we draw the veil of oblivion over their names; and shrink from naming them, in the very church which they founded?

There is no Protestant Christian but knows that worship is due to God alone; and it would be very difficult to excite, in our time,—among us,—that kind of enthusiasm for persons, who lived eighteen hundred years ago, which would make us,—however we might revere them,—to regard them with idolatry. In the Papal church, there is no doubt such danger; as not only the apostles, but the “saints” of later, and even modern days,\* are by it invested,—in their relics and pictures even,—with miraculous power: appeal being thus made to the senses as well as to the mind. Instead of this, our church, in keeping simply before her in the occasional commemoration of those few holy apostles,—saints and martyrs as they were,—their blessed lives and examples, but brings their living memory and communion to our spirits with a warm and quickening influence; and with that bond of sympathy, which makes the Christian church ONE, from the beginning to the end; and even one

\* The Roman church continues to this day to introduce new saints into the calendar.

with the church in heaven, whither they have gone before. Should the Church, then, lose this privilege? And if SHE does not honor them, who will? May she, then, regard in her simple way, —but which is yet expressive and effective, — those to whom, under God, she owes her very being; and as she knows them more and more, by religious instinct and spiritual understanding, she will feel more and more that they were men of “like passions” with ourselves; who lifted up their voices for themselves as well as others, lest even they, in the end should become “cast-away.” Their life and example, then, become to us more and more, not objects of worship; but of calm study, and holy incitement and instruction.

Thus may the “memorial days” — coming here and there as is their wont — be marked brightly in the calendar by earnest Christian hearts, as one more opportunity, in the midst of week-day avocations, of entering into the house of God; and being baptized anew in its holy and heavenly atmosphere. How does it not compose and quiet the jarring discords of the outer world, so to lay aside for a little while, its anxieties and cares!

We would, then, with joy accept the summons to enter for an hour; and breathe the spirit of calmness and peace, of religious trust and hope.



#### IV.

#### GREAT CHRISTIAN DAYS.

THE minor festivals, or "holy days," of the Church are optional, and not obligatory. One may be a fervent Christian, and yet feel no especial call to commemorate the "days of the saints." Even in our own communion, these are not universally kept — perhaps not generally so. Or one may doubt the advisability of their observance, according to the reasoning of a "Liberal" journal, thus: "Many of these (church-festivals) occur on week-days, and are therefore objectionable; for it is evident that our churches are open on Sundays full as often as people are desirous of public worship, and multiplying the occasions would only be thinning the attendance on each occasion, as is evident from the Sundays before

and after our Fast Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, &c." \*

Besides the Sunday observances and the minor "memorial" days, however, there are four great church, or rather we would say Christian days, which, it would seem, should be of public acknowledgment by every body of Christians, of whatever name.

These are Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension ; marking the four great events of the history of Christ, on which our whole faith and hope are founded, — his birth, his death, his rising from the grave, and his ascension into heaven, where now he ever lives to make "intercession for us."

Until within recent years, none of these days were commemorated by the "dissenting" bodies. The same "Liberal" paper from which we quoted above, reasons thus about Christmas : "We pass by Christmas. It is almost certain Christ was not born on what is called Christ-mas day ; and, if he was, all men are born." But all men are not Saviours, nor was any but this One ; neither did any but he reveal the Christian religion ; he alone is the Head of our faith ; therefore, from all

\* We would here submit a note, which we suspect would contain more generally the truth, — that those who from *religious principle* or *affection* make it a point to attend church on the lesser days, certainly would not be likely to omit the practice on the greater day of Sunday.

these reasons, it seems fitting that this birthday should be kept. Indeed, it has been an instinct of the Church, from the first century, to commemorate *that* birth; and though the precise day may not be known, it was one of the three hundred and sixty-five of the year; and the fact is not affected, whether it were in summer or winter, in December or June. If the Christian Church of the early ages agreed to celebrate it on such a day, the twenty-fifth of December, as now it stands, it is the same to us, after these eighteen hundred years, causing no difference whatever as to the honor due to the occasion. It is the event that is commemorated, and not the hour or day of that event.

In point of fact, the birth of Christ has become identified, not only with the religious faith and joy of Christendom, but with the world's innocent amusements and even gayeties: the very children with their first lisps breathe the name of Christmas; and thus *that* history has made a stamp, an impress, upon the civilized community, never to be obliterated. Even in this "free," religious country, there is probably not an "independent" Christian organization of any kind, at this day, but has in some manner its observance of Christmas.\*

\* The writer was once much struck, in conversation with a Jew, to hear him allude to his "*Christmas presents*."

Easter, as a joyful occasion, has also made, or is making, upon the religious world at large, the same impression; and probably there is now, scarcely a place of "Christian" meeting, on that day, but has some allusion to it, in one form or another. We quote from the same "Liberal" organ: "Easter is always Sunday, because Christ rose on Sunday. . . . We would unite then, in this case, with the millions of Christians against the handful, and distinguish the day. . . all do not rise from the grave. This is the sealing event of our religion. This is the greatest occurrence in the world's whole history."

Good Friday, if not so much observed in public by the various denominations, is, we believe, making more and more its way to true Christian hearts of every name, even of those who regard little, "memorial days." And what day so great to the earnest Christian, what event more important than — *so* important we might say, it being the very end for which he was born and lived, as — the death and sacrifice of Christ? It is that which belongs to our innermost salvation; and no one can feel himself as having passed from death unto life, without also feeling that this is due to Christ, — in not only that He *lived*, but that He *died* for us.

Those three days, then, are essential landmarks in the Christian's experience, — the Birth, the

Death, and the Resurrection of the Saviour ; and these to him, instead of diminishing, are but growing ever, of more and more vital importance.

And the Ascension ? Is it not this which seals, as it were, the truth of all the foregoing ; which spiritualizes those events, or reveals to us their spiritual import ; making of them all but one great chain leading upward to heaven ? What Christian, in the depths of his heart, will lay aside the fact of Christ's returning again to the glory of the Father, and doing so visibly to mortal eyes, — the record of it being left to us as clearly and emphatically, as that of the other great events of His life ?

The great branches of the Church catholic, — Roman, Greek, Anglican, our Anglo-American, etc. — have ever consecrated this day, with the others, in the ecclesiastical year ; and when, with Christmas and Easter, the community at large comes also to recognize publicly, Good Friday and Ascension Day, then indeed may we have reason to think, that the world has become " Christian."





## V.

### THE DIFFERENT COMMUNIONS.

UNDER this title it is not designed to go into the origin and history of the different branches of the Church universal; or of the rightfulness and propriety of the existence of the various denominations, each under its independent head. We only design to take Christendom as it is, and give a few glances at its actual state.

The Christian Church began to have divisions, or rather differing opinions on some points, in the first age, even during the lifetime of the apostles. Peter, at first, required the circumcision of Gentile converts; Paul boldly denied the necessity. Some began to say, "I am of Paul;" others, "I am of Apollos;" "I am of Cephas." *Was, then, Christ divided?* asks the apostle. No, we gather from all his writings. "As the body is

one," he says, "and hath many members;" . . .  
 "so also is Christ; for by one Spirit are we all  
 baptized into one body." . . .

To differ is human; no one being perfect, or  
 able to see *all* of *every* thing.

The great spiritual doctrines have however, for  
 the most part, been firmly maintained through  
 all differences, and have triumphed from time  
 to time, over all heresies and oppositions. This  
 necessarily and naturally, as the *spiritual* Church  
 —Christianity in itself, its soul, as above said  
 by the apostle—is *one*; and being but an em-  
 bodiment of the Spirit of truth,—that Spirit  
 being vital, and Its own illuminator,—It is con-  
 stantly preserving the truth, and bringing it to  
 light. Therefore the spiritual unity of the  
 Church, in its essential features, has been pre-  
 served to this time, and so must continue to be  
 unto the end.

This spiritual Christianity is composed of the  
 vital members of the Church in all times, and  
 among all nations,—of those who confess the  
 name of Christ, are baptized unto Him, and  
 reach after Him in their daily life. They may  
 not all perceive precisely and clearly the same  
 points in detail; but they have His *spirit* in their  
 hearts, and, single-minded and in earnest, they  
 are carried on in simple Christian aim and effort.

To verify the truth of this, we have only to

look at the *good* man — by whatever name he may have been called — when his end approaches, — when the world is passing, to him, away, and he is to enter upon scenes untried. However dim may have been his vision, or uncertain his faith, all is now rectified : he knows that in himself is no good thing ; it is on the mercy of God alone that he relies ; it is in Christ that he feels his salvation ; Christ now to him is all in all, — to His hand he reaches forth, to His words of comfort he clings.

They who think that Christianity is losing its hold on the world, is becoming “antiquated,” “effete,” have only thus to stand by the bed of the dying, and see how there it is living in all its force. No one passes from this life to the other with peace, with joy, with satisfaction, with consolation, but through that door — the gate, the portal — of Christianity. If they have never found it before, they search for it then. They may stumble ; they may be in darkness, despair : but the moment that gate, opening to them, is discovered, joy irradiates their countenance ; they feel, they know, that they pass from death unto life. Is not, then, Christianity living, powerful, the *most vital* influence existing upon the earth ? able even to change the wicked, the criminal, the desperate, and illuminate his last moments with a divine glory !

Christianity, then, is the one thing needful ; and it is well in time to purify one's faith, and to make one's " calling and election sure."

The spiritual Church is thus living, breathing, palpitating around us : but what is the state of the external Church ?

The external Church has, it is plain, as was said, from the earliest era been more or less divided ; but more, probably, at this day than ever before. But to what end, to what purpose, is the question which agitates men's minds ?

Did we see sameness and uniformity throughout nature and providence, we might think to no good end, to no good purpose. But it is not so : variety and diversity are as natural and profuse as the very air we breathe. Division of labor and use have also stamped their impress upon every thing of earth,—from the family and household, where are numerous departments all tending to the general good, to the farm, the workshop, the place of business, the school ; each performing its own separate and distinct province, yet each one bearing on human life its own essential influence. Or—a more apposite simile—as in some grand cathedral are compartments, niches, chapels, each for an appropriate use, and adding to the architectural beauty, yet all composing but one great design ; so we may suppose, that under Providence, the divine

Architect, what seems now but disorder and confusion in the Christian world is but the foundation, the sub-structure, of a vast temple of human growth and progress, whose top in noble spires will ultimately reach to heaven.

Each communion, each sect, we can but believe, in its part, is doing its work: the plan may be a little blind just now; but little by little it clears up, and the outlines may be observed, rising erect and strong, from the surrounding rubbish. Each has something it—or he—is *sure* should be done. Let each, then, forgetting the things that are behind,—and not delaying, to criticise his neighbor's work,—go on in his faith and strength; doing that which he sees is to be done, or that which is given to *him* to do. Then may each feel that his part has not been in vain; and that, in the end, his, too, may be a stone fit for the “polished corners” of the temple.

But, practically, we are ill at ease; wishing such or such might be changed; that so *much* diversity is hard for *unity*. Well, then, let us see how actually it stands; bringing before us first, however, the prime idea of the Christian Church. Inwardly, it is that of Christ,—His advent, life, death, and resurrection, with all their influences upon humanity. Outwardly, the main

principle is, "assembling together" for praise, prayer, and instruction in holy things. Let these two be faithfully observed, and all else, we believe, may safely be left to fall into its due place: remembering that the divine and spiritual are the alone vital, and therefore essential; externals in themselves are not spiritual, and therefore not the essential.

Let but the doctrines be true, and it matters little, it appears to us, in these times, whether one *prefer* to worship in one mode or another, — is more edified and devotionally quickened by, and consequently more pleased and happy in, this form of service or that.

But the different divisions have been apt to make these things of importance; each believing that its own mode most resembles the form of the primitive Church, and *therefore* is the most true.

This, we conceive, is an error, inasmuch as no precise form is dwelt upon in the New Testament. Were this *inherent* in the new dispensation, — that of the *Spirit*, — it would undoubtedly have been provided for, as was the worship ordained for the Jews in the Old-Testament times. That was a *schoolmaster*, to bring them to *Christ*, the revelation yet to come. They needed that guiding discipline and ceremonial, to conform them, to train them, to "better things."

But with the gospel "old things were done away, all things became new." It was natural, however, that the Jews, on receiving Christianity, should go on in a measure with their accustomed mode — the object being the same — of worship and instruction in divine things ; only the new revelation did away with the sacrifices, the One Great Sacrifice for sin being now accomplished.

But the Gentiles, — from whom *we* spring, — were not required to adopt any former usage of the Jews. It is probable, however, that they resembled them in this, — retaining some of their own customs of public worship — in adopting the new religion. Human nature, clinging to what it has been used to, indoctrinates the new upon the old, as far as possible ; and this undoubtedly from a natural or providential provision, that the world, in its progress of life, may not be subject to too violent breakings and interruptions. To those who have observed and investigated the Roman Church in its own country, — the original "Gentile" world, — the evidences are plain, that the doctrines of Christianity, in course of time, were, in many points, implanted upon the old religious forms of the country.\*

In former times then, without doubt, each branch of the Church, in its own country, had its

\* This, probably, was the case in a great measure when Christianity, under Constantine (A.D. 325), was made the law of the land.

original peculiarities. (Before the papal domination, this was apparent in the original Anglican, or British, — Gallican churches, etc., and still is in the Swedish, Russian services, et cætera.)

Nor does it seem more necessary now, that all should be conformed to the same pattern, — excepting in the great *outlines*; or that we should seek to be copying those of an ancient time as more true and appropriate, than what belongs, naturally, to our own time, and habits of thought and living. Exteriors of all kinds grow old, and thus tend to decay: to retain the great features unbroken, they must be gradually re-adapted (“repaired”), as need be, and thus preserved for the growing wants and spirit of mankind.\*

\* A simple illustration of this is the “Hymnal” which has been arranged and adopted by our branch of the Church in late years; thus meeting the growing wants of the people.

Another simple illustration of this principle, is in church architecture, on which sentiment is divided, among all Christians, as to any thing elaborate or ornate. But the spirit of the age — and it is one mark of human progress — is to ennoble and beautify all architecture. Dwelling-houses, business-places, are made as imposing as means will allow: this is a *natural* form of expansion of the human mind and taste. Would it, then, be possible or suitable to overlook this “ideal,” — or this “habit of thought and life” of our own time, — and endeavor to restrict church architecture to a severe plainness, as, perhaps, more consistent with the Christian or religious spirit?

On the contrary, should not the mind give to religion (as has been an instinct in all ages), as well as to other things, of its best and highest; thus letting the Church, in its architecture, *fall in with the spirit of the times*, — not in extravagance or prodigality, — but in producing appropriate, chaste, and beautiful forms? — Among the greater, more

Our own communion provides for this, in the following passage from the preface to her Prayer Book: "It is a most invaluable part of that blessed *liberty wherewith* CHRIST *hath made us free*, that in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the faith be kept entire; and that, in every church, what cannot be clearly determined to belong to doctrine must be referred to discipline; and therefore, by common

vital "re-adaptions," "repairs," which have taken place from time to time in the long centuries of its existence, in regard to doctrine, where the Church had fallen into desuetude, — decay we might say, — was that following the new announcement by Luther, of the doctrine of "Justification by Faith," in opposition to the scheme of penalties and "indulgences" then in vogue; and which, with other providences, caused the remodelling or "reforming" of great parts at least of the Church catholic, as in England, Germany, etc.; thus *renewing* the Church, handing down its doctrines in greater purity to the following centuries. And in that part of the Church which then still continued to remain "Papal," perhaps as great and essential a reforming, renewing, and repairing, is now taking place in the "Old Catholic" movement against the doctrine of papal "infallibility," which in a large body of that branch of the Church it is now impossible to reconcile with the growing religious *instincts* even of mankind.

*Partial* movements, of which we have an example of late in our own communion (since this volume was in preparation for the press), cannot be considered in general as "reformatory," not being founded upon a universal principle, but usually upon some personal motive or idiosyncrasy of the movers. "Bishop Cummins," whose name appears at the head of this movement, — if it is so entitled to be called, — the writer learns, was originally a Methodist; and it is not unnatural that he might desire to affiliate again with his earlier brethren. He has the same *kind* of liberty to do so that others have assumed in forming new sects, — but we see no propriety in his calling his organization the

consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most convenient for the edification of the people." . . .

She quotes also from the Church of England to the same effect (Preface of her Book of Common Prayer), as having laid it down as a rule, that "the particular form of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indiffer-

"*Reformed*" Protestant Episcopal Church, since it is especially his own move, and not the "movement" of any appreciable part of that communion. Nor do we see any authority for his doing so, as in leaving that communion—as he announced,—he had no longer, of course, the right of performing any office therein; and consequently, whatever he erects, must be his own, independent Denomination.

This seems scarcely the place, only as coming under the class of a true "reform," to suggest (if it may not be deemed presumption in the author), that the *cumbersome* name of our church be taken into consideration at the General Convention, and changed if possible, officially, to *Anglo-American*, which is now frequently used,—or some other name, appropriate—for two reasons, simple and logical. First, "Protestant Episcopal" is never used familiarly, and is too *long* for writing; this might seem a trifling matter, but not so when we take into consideration the aggregation of *moments* into *days, months, years*, it may be, in the future of the Church; and is it well to encumber either ourselves or posterity with this *unnecessary* expenditure of time, the most precious and irredeemable of all things? Second; the present name is not a logical one; does not express the true status of our communion. We are but a branch of the English Church; direct Child, Offspring; were separated from it only by external circumstances and necessities; we did not *protest* against any thing—there was nothing, in this case, that we wished to "protest" against. We belong indeed to *protestant*, in contra-distinction to *papal* Christendom; but this title does not appear to the author to express our *true, natural* position as a *separate* communion.

ent and alternate, and so acknowledged, it is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigencies of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those who are in places of authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient."

Let, then, the ideas of worshipping God, and spreading abroad the knowledge of Christ, be pre-eminent, in each part of the Church spiritual, universal, and we need not fear, it seems to us, but all will be right in the end. To the pure, all things are pure; to the devout, all things are devout. If devotion, reverence, æsthetic and religious tastes, are gratified by a more elaborate ritual, — in imitation, it may be, of the great array among the hosts of heaven when worshipping before the throne of the Almighty and the Lamb, — we see not why it may not be used, to an extent, — remembering always, in this enlightened age, the limitations of *reason*, and the weakness of human nature; and how prone these are to make idols of their very servants, and to subject themselves to that which was given but to *aid*, and not to *rule*.

On the other hand, if others forget all "save Christ and him crucified;" stopping not at "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," but

finding bare walls and a roof all that are necessary, that they may preach the gospel "in season and out of season," in their interest to save men's souls,—this, too, is of the very spirit of the apostolic ministry.

Thus "all things to all men" may still be a maxim of the Church in these days, it appears to us, as truly and honestly as when adopted by St. Paul in his pioneer labors for the infant Church. "Let every man," \* he said,—speaking of things external, which are not the *essential*,—"be fully persuaded in his own mind;" in things indifferent,—or not of *authority*, as we might say—following his own taste,—choosing his own place of worship.

Therefore we would believe, that in the economy of Providence, amid all the diversities of the human mind and history,—all being permitted and overruled by Him,—each portion of the Christian world, has its own fitting work and influence, destined to some special end.

Romanism, with its pictures and showy ceremonies, gratifies the religious tastes and sensibilities of the masses in its own countries; and in this country, perchance, supplies that element to the great numbers of our foreign population, that they would little obtain elsewhere; bring-

\* Rom. xiv. This verse also (30) in chap. iii. might be applicable to this whole subject: "Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."

ing them out from the dull routine of a constantly working-day life, into the more cheering atmosphere of their church-services. These, associated to them with the beautiful and imposing in outward show, draw them with a warm and living interest, and thus become part and parcel of their daily life.

The Anglican and our Anglo-American communions — twin sisters, the same, yet not the same, — in their noble Litany and devout and simple Liturgy ; avoiding the extremes, of Romanism on the one hand, and the multiplicity of sects on the other — appear to us to stand as a great centre, preserving the balance between these two.

Presbyterianism (or Congregationalism) is the very personification of faithful Christian work, showing what religious determination and effort may do ; building up Sunday schools, — the “nursery of the Church,” — inciting revivals\* of religion, carrying the gospel, in missions and in the distribution of the Bible, to every creature.

Methodism, in its itinerary organization, embraces the very spirit of the apostolic missionaries, traversing the remotest bounds, to introduce the knowledge of Jesus.

\* Although these technically do not fall in with the spirit and polity of our own communion, no doubt, in the bodies where they exist, they are one means of keeping up the sentiment and truths of religion, and have their effect upon society at large.

The Baptist, in his adherence to adult baptism, keeps the importance of this rite prominent before the world. Who knows, in the present state of society, if it were confined to infants only, but that the necessity of the rite might be forgotten, and the very fact itself become obsolete, to many minds?

So with Unitarianism: its doctrine against the Divine Trinity but makes more ardent and forcible the Trinitarian belief; and Rationalism, (or "Free-Religion,") but makes more sincere and devoted, the simple follower of Christ.

Thus one doctrine after another of Christian truth is brought out in bold relief, until deeply impressed and marked upon the world. Therefore, even though external unity might happily be desired, we may not be impatient, it appears to us, or sorrowful and misgiving, that all do not worship in one form; or find their fitting work in the same religious sphere. It is not so in any other element of life, where variety in *external* things predominates; why should it be so in the religious? In the great essential spiritual truths, most do unite: in other points, — we would say, — let them agree to *disagree*; thus dwelling in harmony and peace; each working out its own mission, with whatever light it has. So may the world eventually see rising a noble House, spiritual and divine, — of which *all* the parts are, God's.



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PART III.

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## I.

### OUR OWN COMMUNION :

#### ITS INTERIOR SPIRIT.

. . . How to describe its fair proportions, — the life and grace within, which bring peace and rest to the soul ; and the external rites and means, which no less provide for its hallowed teachings !

Not that we would narrow ourselves down to a single, individual portion of the great Church catholic ; but each person must have a *home* in his church as well as in his social relations ; and that which is our “home,” we naturally affiliate with, are drawn to it with a closer tie, and possess of it a more perfect knowledge. Our Anglo-American communion, then, — the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, — we take but as one branch of the Church catholic, and describe it because we know it ; and love it, as that with which our own religious interests are most connected.

And where shall we begin to draw its features, — one after another, — bound as they all are with every tie of the heart; like those of a mother, whose kindly influence is in every relation, and we would scarcely know which most to revere, or which we would first depict? But as our mother — the Church — takes the infant from the cradle into her arms, why should we not commence there, — with the first breathings of life of this mortal man, — and see how she carries him on through all the steps of his pilgrimage, until she leaves him at length at heaven's gate, there to be received — to go up higher?

Yes: our own beloved church takes us from our parents' arms, marks us with the waters of holy baptism and with the cross,\* which is henceforth to be our guide as well as support. These are the sign and seal of our adoption into Christ's church, there to be brought up under Christian influences, a Christian child, to a Christian manhood or womanhood.

But is it children alone who are to enjoy this privilege, — infants of but a few days or months, — who are admitted by this rite to Christian union and church influences? Ah, no! Those who

\* To mark with the sign of the cross at baptism is not-obligatory, but optional with the sponsors or minister. Baptism alone introduces into the Church.

have not been so fortunate as from early life to be trained under these influences, can at whatever period, if they but come, receive this holy rite of being made a "member of Christ's Church." All the way along, from the cradle to the grave, does the Church bestow her baptism, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," whenever there is application; and also does she perform it in the manner one prefers, — by sprinkling, or by immersion. Thus, not confined to a rigid rule, she opens her doors wide to those who will enter; from the infant to the gray-haired man. It is proper, indeed, to take children, through their guardians or "sponsors," to make them members of the Church, as such, that they may thus be brought up in religious life and duty: but there is still the great majority outside, who have never had such admittance; and they can thus as freely come, as the children born within its fold.

Again, the Church provides that these children shall have instruction; and not only this, but that her ministers themselves shall draw them around, and examine them in the progress they are making. Ten or twelve times a year, — once a month, — are they thus brought into intercourse with their pastor, to have his guidance and instruction in religious things, — in their duty to God, to their parents, to their neighbor, and

themselves. And if the *natural* home also coincides with the minister and church, and trains them in the "way they should go," how truly pure and Christian may not the lives of those children become, so led and guided! The grace, the Spirit of God, invoked and received at their baptism, thus watered and nourished, will it not grow and expand by His blessing showered upon these faithful endeavors?

But—the "world is all before them." Childhood may be safe, sheltered in the arms of kindred and church; but what beyond? Is the Church's vigilance to stop here? is she no longer to watch over the little flock intrusted to her keeping,—to guide their feet in the very slippery paths of youth, which are just opening to them? Ah, yes! Still, as a nursing mother, she lets not go her hold. As soon as they are well taught in the simple duties of childish life, and the moral laws which God exacts from his children, in the Ten Commandments; and have learned the prayer of Jesus, "Our Father which art in heaven;" and know the simple articles of belief, as stated in the Apostles' Creed,—they are again brought, not only within the church-door, but to the altar,—the "Inner Temple," as it were. Before, they had but looked in, were in the outer court, the place of preparation,—the place where Christ himself was at twelve years

old, when he sat in the Temple with the doctors, hearing them, asking them questions ; talking, of the *Way of life*. Now, at this “age of discretion,” — at twelve, fourteen, sixteen years, or so, — a greater responsibility comes upon them. Their parents have done their part : they took them to the house of God, to be brought up in his knowledge ; and now they must examine, themselves, if “these things are so.” They have been taught God’s ways ; and now they must come voluntarily forward to embrace them, as of themselves, — be CONFIRMED in all good things, to follow them to their “life’s end :” others no longer responsible for them, but to be amenable themselves to their own conscience and to God, for the solemn vows and promises which have been made for them.\*

Then, indeed, will they have entered “within the veil ;” and to be partakers, spiritually, of

\* They who recall this period of youth in their own experience or in the observation of others, — this “age of discretion,” when the reasoning powers are beginning to exert themselves, — will remember how the soul — the spiritual nature itself — seemed also to be awakening ; and the excessive *conscientiousness* which would at times assume control, making one scarcely dare to say one had done this or that, even in the simplest and most palpable things, lest one might be uttering an *untruth*.

This natural period, as it may be called, of the soul’s awakening — becoming conscious of itself — shows how correct is the Church’s principle and practice, in coming forward at this critical juncture to aid and strengthen those upward aspirations, which might otherwise, perchance, be transient and vanishing, into the way of true growth and religious peace.

Christ's body and blood, in the Holy Supper of remembrance and communion, which He himself instituted.\*

Can the Church do more? Ah, it is now only, or principally, that the "*warfare*" has begun,—the struggle between the "world, the flesh, and the devil," and — *righteousness*; a veritable warfare at times, which *may* pursue a man through all his active years of life and business. The Church and her ministers still offer the Sabbath sanctuary for aid and instruction, not only every month as in childhood, but every *week*; that the man of business, of active life, may turn aside, at least this one day in seven, to *remember* his early vows, his religious calling; to separate himself for the time from those things of the flesh, which wind themselves so closely about us; and to renew his aspirations after spiritual things. The Church took him in his youth, when nature was all aglow, and when his spiritual mind was just awakening, and turned it to "better

\* It would seem, by remarks sometimes heard from persons outside of our church, that they supposed that every one, confirmed and admitted to the holy communion, thus becoming in full a "member of the Church," was required to sign and subscribe to the "Thirty-nine Articles."

This is a mistake. The only requisitions of the kind are, as stated in the text, a knowledge of the Church Catechism, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer.

Although there may undoubtedly, be an understanding of *assent* to them, formal "Subscription" to the Articles, is not required in this country, even of those who go into the Ministry.

things." But the enthusiasm of early life and spirits, flags : it is not so much incitement now that is needed, but *encouragement* by the way ; strengthening, feeding on God's word, to renew us for the daily strife. He who loses these weekly opportunities of re-invigorating himself by rest and quiet, and religious thought, will soon find his Christian experiences — hopes and joys — vanishing, one by one ; until he begins to feel himself without Christ, without knowledge, without anchor ; and at last, in long years passed, he may find himself spiritually, — though overgrown perhaps in outward prosperity, — but a wreck and a ruin, on life's shore, where he had begun so bravely and so well.

If Christian men and women desire to remain *Christian* after the enthusiasm of early years has passed, let them keep to the CHURCH, — going in regularly at her open door ; and there abide under the shadow of the Almighty. If prosperity is theirs, this sanctifies and ennobles it ; if adversity, yet in religious faith and trust there is a peace that the world knows not of.

In the holy hour of marriage, the Church hallows us with its prayers and blessing ; and at the day of death, what so desirable as her blessed ministrations of peace and comfort for the dying, and of consolation to the afflicted ; and after death,

her tender and reverent burial to the dust from which we came, thence, — through this same blessed Church influence and instruction, perchance, — to rise again to the joyful hope of immortality?

Yes : from the cradle to the grave the Church goes with us, more intimately, if we yield to its influence, than any other earthly relation but that of the very home itself. Then, is it not a religious *home*, and Mother to us, drawing and inspiring us with the cords of a love and interest, never ceasing?

But not only a nursing “mother” in all these tender relations : it is a guiding *father* as well. In its clear and intelligent knowledge of divine things, it informs our minds of that which is “necessary unto our peace.” It speaks with no “uncertain sound :” distinctly it gives its utterances ; and faith yields a ready assent, for the SPIRIT witnesseth in our hearts.

Those among us who lend themselves to the ideas or spirit of “rationalism” and unbelief, can expect only to be filled with doubts and misgivings : it is but entering into the very whirlpool of uncertainty. But our communion, in itself, happily gives no encouragement to this sceptical spirit. Founded on the history and words of Christ, — on the Bible, the word of God, — its doctrines are

plain, intelligible, irrefutable. And these great doctrines,—of the natural imperfection and inability of man, before God his Maker ; his need of redemption and recovery from sin ; the all-efficiency of Christ's atonement ; our justification from all things by faith in Him ; and the belief in the divine and ever-present Trinity, — these great foundation doctrines, it holds in common with the Church catholic, throughout the world.

Let us examine a little into these. Who says that man is not by nature finite, sinful, and imperfect ? Observe but the youngest child, that is but just beginning to show voluntary and conscious action, and we see immediately that *evil* is standing there side by side with the good, and, to be developed, needs, usually, but to have good influences withdrawn. Leave it exposed to evil, and in most cases, a rich harvest of the same, is soon ready to be reaped. Thus evil springs, as it were, out of the ground. And if we look at the facts of daily life, — the crimes, frauds, and wickedness constantly occurring, in the midst, apparently, of the very best outward positions and surroundings, — what *can* one think, but that these come from a man's own sinful heart, left to itself. How could sin obtain such hold upon him, were there no *natural* sin there, to respond ?

And who does not feel that such man needs a — regeneration ; to be brought out, to be re-

covered, from this state of sin and moral death, unto life ; to be *redeemed* unto holiness ?

Can he, — immersed in iniquity, — redeem himself ? Sinfulness and wickedness, cannot come before God : “ He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” Purity and holiness only, can mediate with Him ; and he turns to the only *sinless* One, and cries out, “ Lord, have mercy upon me, for CHRIST’S sake ! ” Yes, Christ, the innocent One, had lived and died ; his life had been given in self-sacrifice, and He becomes our propitiation with the Father ; he alone, being pure, can mediate between us and the Father.

Does not one feel himself *justified*, in thus turning to Him, believing in Him ? and through this one is made a new man, to lead a new life, — a life of the soul and of the spirit, instead of a life of the world and of sense.

What was true of such a man, is true of every one of us. There is no one living who would say in his heart, that he might not have been among the most wretched of these, under the same circumstances : it is the frailty, imperfection, sinfulness by *nature*, which belongs to all mankind.

And thus comes in the blessed and heaven-descended doctrine of the Trinity : *we* have *rebelled* against God ; have forgotten Him ; gone far out of the way ; and in the midst of the snares, complications, dangers, and corruptions

within and about us, surrounded by mists and darkness, we cry out, "Woe is me, I am undone! Lord, save ; or we perish !"

Then He who descended from heaven, took our nature upon him, and went through its temptations, that he might know and feel with us, — yet without sin, — answers to our afflicted souls, Because I live, ye shall live also !

Christ still liveth, to make intercession for us. It is not that he lived and died only, but that he *rose* again : not alone that he took flesh and dwelt among us, and became the Light, Instruction, and Example of men, — and that in a distant age, a long time ago, — but that he is still with us, and dwells in us, by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. As God was present by his Son when in bodily form upon the earth ; so is he now present with us spiritually, by the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son : *he* is our present guide, to lead us unto eternal life. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ! the Three in One, the One in Three, — never to be divided ; thus making possible — our knowledge, salvation, and *present* help.

And the principal agent of God the Holy Spirit, in this work of man's instruction in spiritual things, his salvation and present help, — what is it but the Church ? Christ's Church, which he founded and washed in His own blood, as says holy writ ;

the Church which has come down from the apostles and martyrs, through long ages ; sometimes sorely tried, cast out, and persecuted, but always with a new life rising again from its ashes ; and now at this day, after eighteen hundred years, firmly established, with a perennial and ever-deepening life, in every enlightened quarter of the world ; showing its walls and towers thickly scattered, and its spires rising in every community ; and dispensing from its altars, the bread of spiritual life, to the thousands of souls regularly gathered, to attend — not only to the things of their *present* moral good, — but of their *eternal* peace !

What shall we do for this Church, the great earthly instrument, — divinely established, — of God's redemption of man ; and, more particularly, for our branch of it, that with which we are immediately connected, — but to love it, care for it, watch over its prosperity, aid it in its mission in the world ? Thus shall we be co-workers with God ; thus, also, shall we fortify *ourselves*, in our probation from earth to heaven, with a twofold cord which shall never be broken, — that of the CHURCH and the HOLY SPIRIT.



## II.

### OUR OWN COMMUNION :

#### ITS EXTERNAL WORSHIP.

WE have spoken principally of the *inner* spirit, or life,—it might be called,—of our communion ; but what are its more external features ?

Let us look a little in detail at this form of worship, which those outside of it, are prone to look at merely *as* a form, cold, rigid, stately ; and those who come to it from other bodies, often wish perchance, that such, or such, might be changed, modified, maybe — discarded.

Let us begin with the simple preparatory sentences at the commencement of the Service, when the minister rises, and the people with him ; and he reads one or more of those Scripture sentences, with which the Book of “Common Prayer” begins.

What more appropriate, to collect the minds of the congregation ; to draw their attention at once to the occasion ; to quiet, humble, and compose them for the devotion and worship that are to follow, than this — formal it may be, but yet simple — introduction, into the presence-chamber, as it were, of the King of kings ?

For further preparation, the congregation are then kindly, and gently, exhorted to make a full and free confession of their sins, to Almighty God, humbly kneeling before Him ; the minister joining with them, as but a man with themselves.

Here, indeed, is a “confession,” — and a “confessional,” — not with the details of crimes and wickedness, as if to a personal umpire, — a private medium, — like one’s self ; but which are known in the sinner’s own heart, and are laid bare, in this act of prostration, before his Maker : a public confession ; a confession before the world, as before God ; thus, according to the scripture injunction, “confessing our faults one with another.”

But if a suffering, burdened conscience cannot obtain relief in this way, the Church expressly provides, that such a one shall go privately to his minister.\* What more sufficing, more truth-

\* See Prayer Book, first Exhortation to the Communion Service.

ful, more reasonable, than such arrangement, — leading us to confess, which is but the simple duty of a Christian, but with perfect liberty of conscience: no constraint; no enforcement as from man to man; and with the privilege, if one desires, of a more personal application and advice!

Then follows the comforting and soul-sustaining declaration of *absolution*, or of remission, forgiveness, of sins.

But, say some, What right has man to “absolve,” assuming the place of God? He does not do so as in the *place* of God, but simply as a messenger, minister, of God, to proclaim His promise of pardon, on their repentance. “HE pardoneth and absolveth,” are the words used, “all those who truly repent;” the priest inclusively, praying for himself as well as others.\*

Then follows the ever-soothing and blessed

\* “Absolution” in the Roman Church is coupled with very dangerous errors, — “indulgences,” “plenary indulgence,” on some meritorious performance, conditioned by the priest himself, instead of on the simple “repentance” which God’s word requires. An instance of this occurs in a “Papal Allocution” of a few months ago (July 25, 1873), from which we copy the following: —

“That this may be accomplished more certainly and more fully, we grant, by our apostolic authority to all the faithful *who will have duly confessed and communed, and will have prayed for the necessities of the Church in these matters*, a plenary indulgence, . . . which indulgence may be applied for the souls of the faithful departed.”

This is entirely foreign from any thing that either the Anglican, or our own communion sanctions.

prayer of our Lord : and this brings us into the very heart of the usual objections to our form of Episcopal service, — the *written* and *ever-repeated* prayers. They have, indeed, been oft repeated, the most modern of them being not less than two hundred years old (excepting those which are peculiar to our American service, but which come now well nigh up to a hundred years).\* The Lord's Prayer is eighteen hundred years old ; but who is tired of repeating it ?

On the contrary, is it not for the very reason that we have repeated it from infancy, and know every turn and expression of it with a daily

\* The American Prayer Book in use dates from 1790. We are indebted to a little work, "Thoughts on the Services," by the Right Rev. A. C. Coxe, for the following concise notices of our Church prayers. They will no doubt be read with interest by every lover of our communion.

"The Collect for Peace is a very ancient one ; and as it comes from the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great (who was bishop of Rome before the papal claims were set up), we trace its place in our Liturgy to the mission of St. Augustine, whom he sent to convert our Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

"The Collect for Grace is from an ancient Greek source, and reminds us of the Greek origin of the primitive British Church, which existed in England from apostolic times, and which afterwards became one with that of the Anglo-Saxons, converted by St. Augustine.

"The Collect for the Clergy and People . . . is taken from the ancient Prayer Book of St. Gregory, and from that of his predecessor, Gelasius. It has been used in the Church of England for more than twelve hundred years.

"The Prayer for all *Conditions of Men* is of comparatively modern origin, for it was added only two centuries ago.

"The *General Thanksgiving* was added to the service in 1660,

familiarity, that it is endeared to us ; and comes home to our hearts, with a warm and tender interest? Just so do these church prayers, repeated Sunday after Sunday from childhood, sink and dwell in the heart with a loving affection ; and each time they are heard, they are but like the home voices, which one would gladly retain near one all one's life. So, — far from home or our own country, — going into a church of our communion, we feel ourselves no “stranger” there ; but our hearts leap and thrill with emotion, at sound of the long familiar words.

Instead of this “familiarity,” then, producing an indifference — in things so solemn and sacred, — they become, on the contrary, more

and, like the prayer that precedes it, gives proof that much liturgic skill survived in the Church even at that modern period in her history. It is a happy thing that we cannot refer their authorship confidently to individuals, although the bishops who had chief part in them are said to be known. The glory of the Prayer Book is God's only : the merits of men need not concern us in our approaches to God. We only know that these prayers are the Church's clothing, and that it is of ‘wrought gold.’

“The Churches of Cesarea and Constantinople, in very ancient times, made use of the short and very simple prayer which follows, and which is called A Prayer of St. Chrysostom, because it is from the Liturgy which bears his name. Its beauty is of that primitive sort which consists in scriptural purity and point. It is said of the purest incense, that it consumes in fragrance, and leaves no spot upon the censer : all goes up to God. Such are prayers, in which there is nothing human, and which, like CHRIST himself, come from the Father, and return to him.

“The HOLY GHOST is the Author of the next prayer, which is rather a comprehensive benediction, in the name of the Holy Trinity.”

full of meaning and unction, with each growing year. As our own minds expand in spiritual growth, they are more filled with, and take in more comprehensively, all the depths of these spiritual expressions. They are such that we never outgrow, because we cannot surpass them ; never get up to them even : for these short, simple, yet all comprehending petitions of the Prayer Book, are as equally applicable and necessary in our latest, as in our earliest life ; and as much one week or day, as the week or day before or after. Although formed by men like ourselves, — in their brevity, simplicity, purity, and dignity, they are after the very model of our Lord's Prayer, in a manner that no extemporaneous prayers can be ; and therefore they seem peculiarly fitting and appropriate for public worship, when the masses are mingled, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, together, — they being suited to all alike.

But extemporaneous prayers are not discarded in their time and place ; in private, in families, in special meetings, in communion with the sick or suffering, or wherever the occasion may demand.

At the end of each church petition or prayer, rises from the whole people the sympathetic Amen, which keeps the mind and heart following and engaged ; and by this audible, re-

sponsive communion, these things are made our *own*.

We have not finished with our "written" prayers until we have looked at the "Litany," — the general supplication, joined in responsively by both minister and people. Who by "familiarity" can ever exceed this? or on what Christian heart can its flowing words pall, — so full of the riches of divine grace, and of the very treasures of the gospel?

The Litany, with the *Te Deum*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, etc., stand by themselves, as human compositions, in their grandeur and sublimity; like the vast cathedrals scattered over Europe, which one feels must have been produced, not only by devout, but giant intellects: they are such as we should not look for in the present age, perhaps never again. So *those* came, at a period of strong, and lively faith; before the spiritual mind became weakened by ease, sloth, worldly-mindedness; while men were still living in the clear, healthy atmosphere of the hill-tops, — instead of the low valleys; where misty doubts and suspicions, rise over all. They are the pillars of the spiritual temple, erected in a providential era; still to testify to the world, — through all time, — of a true, vital, energetic faith, which will survive all ephemeral structures. Well, then, may we stand by these grand old pillars; seeing a thousand

theoretical creations springing up around us, one by one ; but which, compared to these, are but as mushrooms, and as quickly vanishing away.

The Nicene Creed (the only one besides the Apostles' Creed in the American Prayer Book) should be classed among these strong "pillars." It has been said that it is "indirectly a hymn," as the *Te Deum* is "indirectly a creed."\*

We will here pause a moment, on the Faith of our communion.

That which is expressed in the simple statements of the Apostles' Creed — where, as is said, "there is nothing that may not be found in the single book of the Acts of the Apostles" — might, perchance, have been deemed sufficient, in all essential particulars ; namely, Belief in God the Father ; in Christ, — his advent upon the earth, his death, resurrection, and ascension ; in the

\* See Thoughts on the Services, page 33. We extract also the following interesting remarks : —

"The *Te Deum* is a very ancient hymn, one of the sublimest compositions of uninspired devotion. It came into general use in the time of St. Ambrose, by whom it was introduced to the Church in Milan at the baptism of St. Augustine.

"The Litany concludes with a very ancient prayer, addressed to God the Father ; but it is to be noted, that the words, *put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy*, were introduced by the Reformers, as defining the proper security for a Christian's hope. This they did because they had thrown out a corrupt Litany of the Middle Ages, which used to follow in this place, full of supplications to the saints. . . . Thus the rust and cobwebs of the papal times were put away ; and the Litany [was] restored to its primitive beauty and purity."

Holy Ghost ; the catholic \* Church, — that is, the great body of Christ's Church, as one ; the communion of saints — the fellowship of all Christians, baptized into the same spirit ; the forgiveness of our sins ; and our future resurrection and immortal life.

For those who seek "simplicity" in a creed, here is simplicity itself. The simple facts are given, (with no details of the *how*, the *why*, or the *wherefore*;) and — it is liberal. No wider platform could exist, on which to erect a Christian communion. These are the seeds, the "germ" as says Bishop Coxe, "given by *Christ* himself." †

But our church does not stop here. This simple creed she has in constant use : it can be

\* Those who newly come into the Episcopal Church are often perplexed by this expression. It is by no means the *Roman* Catholic, but the Church *universal*, the Church at large.

† Whoever wishes to identify this, has only to run over the items themselves : God, the Father, was Christ's express teaching to the world ; himself he announced as the Messiah, the Christ ; his resurrection and ascension were special points which he brought forward as proofs of His mission. The presence and assistance of the Holy Ghost was the chief legacy he promised to his disciples. Of the Church "catholic" he says, "On this rock I will build my CHURCH," — not churches, but "Church." Of the "communion of saints" he says, "These things I *command* you, that ye *love one another* : Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, *that they may be one*, as we are. . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also *which shall believe on me through their word* ; that they all *may be one*" (St. John xv., xvii.).

Of our future life He says, "In my Father's house are many mansions : I go to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come again and receive you unto myself ; that *where I am, there ye may be also*" (xiv.).

embraced by the youngest of her flock ; and it is by this,\* as said elsewhere, that she admits to her communion. But in her fulness, and as if to enrich us with all the glories of the gospel, she develops these “ seeds ; ” “ paraphrases ” † these truths,—in the rich and varied forms,—not only of the Nicene Creed ; but in the glorious strains of the Te Deum, and the Gloria in Excelsis ; and in the Litany ; thus bringing her Confessions of Faith to the fore-front ; not as something extra, apart, to be served once in a lifetime or so,—but for constant, weekly, yea, daily use. Verily, this is THE ROCK — these Scripture-doctrines — against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Already, for nearly two thousand years, have they been reiterated upon the earth, and ascending, in the ardent faith of human hearts, to heaven ; and still, in their silent influence, are they ever creeping, more and more, over the waste places of the earth ; fertilizing the wilderness and the desert, and making them bud and blossom with a new, Christian civilization.‡

\* See note, page 148.

† “ In the Nicene Creed, which is used on great festivals, we say the same in paraphrase ; and both creeds may be regarded as paraphrases of the baptismal formula. . . . He who truly believes ‘ in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST,’ believes these creeds, which simply affirm what Holy Scripture testifies concerning each person in the Godhead.” — *Thoughts on the Services.*

‡ This is very observable in the manner in which the Eastern nations are now looking towards Christian countries, for their arts and customs.

Thus we have seen the character of our devotions and our faith: that they are marked, moulded, with the impress of Christianity; no one could mistake them for any other form of communion; they are founded on Christ, they breathe of Christ, they are full of Christ: God in Christ is the one great Name which is stamped over all; in that we are baptized, live, die, and are buried.

“FREE RELIGION.”

But there are those in these days of “free thought,”—it may be added of “free” religion,—who hesitate not to speak of the Christian religion as narrow, partial, dwarfed; that the world is either to have a new revelation, the “Church of the Future,” or—which seems to be synonymous in their minds—fall back upon the “great religion,”—the “religion of humanity,” the “religion” which has existed in all ages,—broadcast over the world. The religions of the East,—the Hindoo, ~~the Brahmin~~, the moral writings of Confucius, etc.,—all seem to stand, in their minds, as something to which the world is yet to come up; not as having passed and done their work,—but as an ideal, still in “advance,” as it were.

It is well known that those religions have never arrived at monotheism,—the pure and

*Buddhism*

simple idea of God, — either in the earlier ages, or down to the present day ; and in this respect, (for no rational person in this era, will say that the belief in a multiplicity of divinities, is superior to that of One Supreme Being), they were far below another old religion of the East, — that of the Hebrew nation.

This was an intellectually, as well as spiritually, progressive religion and — people ; for although, while living in Egypt, their practice in the main, no doubt, fell in with the national, religious life around them, — that of *Fetichism*, — as soon as they migrated, and became a nation of themselves, which was fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, a pure monotheism — worship of One God — was established among them ; and this in connection with intellectual thought, which, in religion, has never been surpassed by minds in our day. In fact, the ideas, outside of Christianity, which we have of the Almighty Being, are derived from the sacred books of the Hebrews. We but repeat what they have taught us in regard to God.\*

\* Many of the purer ideas of God, and of the relations of man, which we are apt perhaps to associate only with the later Christian period, are contained in the writings of Moses : for example, "The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. . . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." . . . Ye are the children of the Lord your God. . . . The poor shall never cease

It is true that this monotheistic worship did not, all at once, seize upon the minds of the masses : it was a slow and laborious process. But, *being the law of the land*, progress came ; and at length, even for four hundred years before the time of Christ, a Hebrew — or Jew, as he was called — would sooner sacrifice his life, than his belief in one Supreme Being ; who was the Almighty Creator of the world, and its continued Parent and Guardian. What other “ old ” religion of the East, has ever come to this, — even with the two thousand years of the world added, since ?

Thus the Jews stood immeasurably above all other nations of that day, in religious thought ; and even no genuine moral precept did the latter possess, that was not embraced in the religion of the Jews. Even the newer, Greek and Roman nations, of the West, surpassed those other, old religions, in moral and intellectual progress of ideas ; and probably nothing can be found in any of the *Vedas*, or sacred books of the Eastern nations (outside of the Hebrews), which will surpass,

out of the land : therefore I command thee. . . . Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy. . . . Thou shalt not wrest judgment ; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift ; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow. Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty ; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. . . . The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms ” (Deut. xxviii.).

if they even come up with, the elevated ideas of Seneca, Socrates, Plato. Why, then, should we, — the descendants of the moral and intellectual civilization of those old Greeks and Romans, — be looking back to the petrified, because unprogressive, religions of antiquity ; when, centuries upon centuries ago, we were already beyond them ? Have *they* a civilization, broad, world-wide, progressive in arts and sciences ; testifying to a religion which has made free their national mind ? or are they not rather, to this day, bound, repressed, degraded, in many respects, by their religious, or no *true* religious, ideas and customs ? These, then, are not the religions which Christianity has to copy or learn from ; or defer to ; or even to *associate* with, — excepting in the way of *doing them good*.

But to show that Christianity does not despise an old religion as such, — the “ religion of humanity,” as it might be called, so world-wide is it in its adaptations to human life and experience, — but, on the contrary, endeavors to retain of it whatever is possible ; to mingle itself with it ; make it its own, — we have only to trace its action in this very church-organization of which we are speaking ; and not alone in the church of our own communion, but in all the great branches of the Church catholic ; and, in doing so, we come to that part of our services which *blends*

this "old" religion with the "new," — the custom of reading responsively, both minister and people, or chanting, — as is sometimes done, — the same Psalms, which were so used in public worship at the time, and before the time, of Christ, in His own country.

These *were* "world-wide" utterances: they still come home to every human heart; and we can conceive of no period of the world, or of mankind, when they will not do so.

Thus Christianity does not reject, however ancient, nor cast aside because it did not spring from her own ~~heart~~, — her own genius, — whatever *breast* could still be of use to man; whatever is applicable to mankind at large. On the contrary, we still see that she cherishes all such; even the stories of old, and the history of religion when monotheism was just emerging from the surrounding darkness — in her constant use of those Old-Testament scriptures of the Jews, which are as regularly read — in our Christian churches of to-day, at morning and evening service, as they were in the synagogues of old; when Jesus himself stood up to read from them publicly, and took from them his "text." Thus does the Church take, even of a nation which has rejected Christianity, that which appears to be in the "*eternal truth*" of things. By no possibility then, it appears to us, can Christianity

be deemed "narrow:" but, on the contrary, of a wider spirit, in theory and in practice, than other human experiences have been known to be; — casting aside, because she has far surmounted it, only that which is useless and valueless.

But it is possible that some may turn upon us here, though inconsistently with their own theory, and exclaim, "We do not want SUCH 'old:' we want to go on, forward, in 'advance.'"

We reply then, Christianity clings to past records, past history *also*, because she knows that she came out of that: she is not a thing by itself, orphan, isolated; but is a child of the Past; the offspring, in the progress of human events. She does not set herself up as independent, unsympathizing, careless of all before her: for she knows that it was in the PROVIDENCE of God only that she came into being; it was but a step, in the fulness of time, — a Divine step — that is, for the SPIRITUAL progress of the race. Hers is a spiritual history, a spiritual system: therefore, — in the innate philosophy of the human mind, which, in every department, connects itself with its *originals*, or commencement, — all of human history or experience that *was* spiritual before, she connects herself with, even clear away back to the beginning.

There is an intellectual, a scientific, and a ma-

terial progress: there must also be moral and spiritual as well; or the world would go back, to the barbarisms of old. It is only to the purity and correctness of its idea of God, that any substantial advance is due. This enlightens all; this puts every thing in its place; this alone is the guide to true order and wisdom: and this "new departure" of old, the outbirth of Christianity, was, (to compare great things with lesser) like our national Declaration of Independence in political relations,—it set the world forward, in a new life. Christianity struck off the fetters and limitations of the past, and revealed God anew in Christ: not now as distant, separate, a ruler mainly, and for *one* people; but as with us, among us, one of us,—as it were,—and for *all* men. This, then, is the burden of Christianity,—still to develop this idea, and still to stir up the life which our *newly-revealed* God—God in Christ—would excite in us. How far the world yet is from comprehending this, or *ap*-prehending it, even faintly, shows how far remote we still are from the *ideal* of Christianity; and what immense room there still is to "go on," to "advance," even should we ever attain to that high ideal.

This immense amount of work which Christianity, the Christian Church, has ever upon its

hands, seems to us — were there no other reason to give — to settle the question so often mooted, What is the province or sphere of the “Church”? We should answer promptly, “*Spiritual* life.”

Every thing else is provided for: the State, the government, have their own organizations; and men trained to their interests and their work, — the work of *political* life. Science, education, and art have their earnest and strenuous seekers; material things of every description have their devoted pursuers: what else is wanting? The care of *souls*; — the Moral and Religious good of mankind. Shall this, too, not have its ardent adherents; those specially devoted to the object? Poor, indeed, is human nature, if its highest and most glorious interests can find no zeal or enthusiasm for *their* special purpose; if its wise men and learned ones, are so faint or limited of vision, that they cannot pierce through the surrounding mists, and rise to the greatness of the occasion! But God is not without His witnesses: the poor and humble of mind, — as they have done in all past times, — will still step in, if the well-to-do and cultivated fail to do their part; or see not the work before them. His instrument, the Church, is already organized: the laborers have but to go into the field, with earnest hands and hearts; and they find them already filled.

And there *are* good men, faithful and true ; *Church-men*, men of the Church, in “our own communion,” and in all communions, who, in the midst of many outward discouragements perhaps, — for this is the very thing they have to contend against, — SENSE, the flesh, and the world, — are working patiently, steadily, and well ; thinking only of the seed they are sowing, and leaving to God, — as they must, — the harvest ; Who ripens all with His own sun and rain.





### III.

#### OUR OWN COMMUNION :

##### ITS DIVERGENCES.

**A** GAIN : After further examination of our Order of worship, we have seen that it is a *reasonable*, and *scriptural* service, as well also, as it is *liberal*, and *apostolic* in organization. The rites of baptism, confirmation, the Lord's supper, and the orders of the ministry, — deacons, priests, and bishops, — were all practices of the primitive Church,\* and, as well as our faith and prayers,

\* The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, the first bishop of the Church of the Ephesians, as stated in the superscription of that letter, says (second epistle, chap. ii.), "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also:*" thus providing for a *succession* of teachers for the express purpose of handing down the truth ; which practice has been continued to this day, in all the historical branches of the Church, in the consecration of bishops and priests.

In his first epistle to Timothy (chap. xi.), St. Paul had said, "I exhort . . . that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, — for kings and for all that

have been handed down from the earliest centuries ; and are therefore not only endeared to us as the original organization of Christianity—or the Church—by the apostles, the immediate successors of Jesus, but we can conceive of none more appropriate, more effective, more simple in all their bearing, than these ; and thus, as we believe them divinely inspired,—the Church itself being of divine institution, although an earthly instrument, an earthly means for spiritual purposes,—we believe that for the same purposes, such organization must and will continue, until the mission of Christianity be fulfilled.

Liberal in spirit, our Church embraces the good of the whole communion. Neither the Anglican Church, nor its American branch, is a *sacerdotal* institution. It is not a *priestly* establishment, ruled and governed by the clergy alone ; thus subject to *their* changes and innovations. The laity have their equal voice in all subjects of church polity, and government. They are free to discuss, and *together*, to *re-form* whatever may be deemed necessary. Thus united, clergyman and people in regular “con-

are in authority ;” thus authorizing, or appointing, we might say, those special prayers and the “general supplications” in our church service.

Elsewhere (Heb. vi.) he speaks “of the doctrines of baptisms, and of laying on of hands,” etc., as of customary use.

stitutional" — as we might call them — conventions ; with careful deliberation and wise forethought, they are able to go hand in hand in proper, Christian work, and for the united good of all.

But — and we now come to the points of divergence, whence parties will arise, — in all hitherto expressed, our church is united : But from the very liberality of its structure, — and especially in these times of great activity and restlessness of the human mind, — even within this so "reasonable" service, diversity of opinion on some points will naturally spring up.

#### RATIONALISM.

We have already alluded (Part First) to the tendency towards "Rationalism" (greater probably in England than in this country) which agitates the Church, it is true, and unsettles the minds of those who come within its influence. So far it is an influence baleful and injurious ; but otherwise, not being an original element of our communion (the seeds being scattered there from without),\* it will, no doubt, at length be drifted outside into the "Free"-religion or no-

\* It is well known that what is specially called "*Rationalism*" in England and America, arose with the free introduction into these countries of German literature, which is the very hot-bed of Rationalism.

Religion from which it sprang. Let but *true* "reason," consistent, reverent, humane, and wise, keep its seat, and we cannot doubt but that Rationalism, — where it leads to doubt and unbelief, — must eventually be foundered on the rocks and quicksands of its own — meandering and rippling, it is true, and therefore attractive, but still — shallow stream.

But no less has the Church to watch, to keep its "reasonable service," in another direction: this, possibly, more an outgrowth of itself, because whoever devotes himself to a special calling, particularly if it be a religious one, is apt, in the very enthusiasm of his interest, to go to excess; to see nought but that; to make every thing bend to the compass of *his* vision, but which in his very devoutness seems to him all-encompassing. This, it seems to us, is the special danger of the clergy everywhere. Occupied with the highest of human interests, and their minds proportionately engaged in this elevated calling, they will of course, in their zeal and with any allowable freedom, do all that is possible, as it appears to them, in that special interest; and, without a just balance of mind and a true knowledge of human nature, (which are not always the qualifications of human beings, even in the best and noblest positions), they are liable,

in this very zeal, to bring their own peculiar functions and those of their church—its rites and ceremonies—to bear, to the exclusion and oversight of other principles.

But this is not peculiar to religion: it is a tendency of all human nature. Whatever may be the occupation, — science, art, or literature, — it is apt to engross the whole man, and become paramount in his view to all else. This may account for the present hostile attitude of science, or rather the scientific world, to revealed religion; *assuming to ~~itself~~ the whole scope and sphere of facts, and knowledge of the universe; forgetting, or overlooking, or disbelieving in, the Spiritual,—that besides the world of science, of materialism, there is a whole *spiritual world*, which has not come within the sphere of their vision,—it not being their peculiar field. It were as futile for them to pronounce upon, or to deny spiritual things, — which are quite outside their world of research, — as it would be for the clergy to deny discoveries in science, because they themselves have not been the means of verifying them. Any antagonism between the two is not, therefore, a *natural* one, but proceeds from an incorrect way of encroaching — *in such manner* — upon one another's sphere; or rather from either class being so filled with the objects of its own particular vision, that it does not per-*

ceive, that there are others, beside. The incompatibility, of course, is not real; for there are scientific men who *are* religious, and religious men who revere science. The whole world of art, science, and religion, being but the creation of one and the same God, each and all can only be good in their place; and, instead of there being, naturally, jealousy and rivalry between them, — the *true* development of any part of His universe can but tend, — we must believe, — to His glory.

#### RITUALISM.

To return. It is from this innate tendency in human nature, whatever be the calling, to appropriate to itself all that is possible, — we believe, that “ritualism” has arisen; which in its genuineness, one might call, perhaps, but an excess, or *fervor*, of the devout spirit — which wishes to spiritualize or symbolize all.

*Excess*, however, in any thing or whatever be the cause or motive, undoubtedly, — and perhaps without exception, — leads to *degeneracy*, deterioration, and corruption. Thus the “ritualistic” movement, especially in England, threatens, apparently, to carry the subjects of it into true *Romanism*.

In external things, processions, banners, in-

cense, etc., are the legalized, acknowledged accessories of the Roman Church. They are its *inheritance*, so to say, from *its* ancestry, — its practices in its own country ; but they are not, originally, genuinely, Anglican, still less *Anglo-American*. They belong to former times ; and do not, in general, fall in with modern habits of thought or philosophy, in connection with religion.

(We do not include, of course, in the above, *simple* "processions," which, on occasions, are necessary and customary among the clergy ; nor the "*processional*," where the choral service is performed ; which seems, then, but fitting and devotional.)

But "ritualism," in copying the "old," in some of those things, feels itself, perchance, as more allied to the "ancient" Church, and so to "original" Christianity. But it is to be remembered, in copying the *antique*, if it so be, in this, it is not the *apostolic* Church which is imitated, but the mediæval one of Rome ; which was implanted upon, or fell gradually into, the practices of the former pagan worship of that country.\*

\* See note, page 132. Whoever doubts the correctness of this assertion, needs only to look at the accessories of the papal church in its own countries, — the shrines of the Madonna at the corners of the streets, the worship of the Virgin in the churches (her statues dressed as a bride, in laces and jewels, and covered with votive offerings, people kneeling before her), prayers to the saints, etc. ; and in the recent papal allocution before alluded to in a note, (page 157)

Thus, if we must imitate, it should be, it would seem, not the *degenerate*, but the original, Gentile (Christian) Church. There — we think of Paul, or of the disciples of Jesus, as officiating in a manner which is not always observable, in *some* of our recent churches. All, with them, was certainly earnest, enthusiastic ; but simple, godly, unaffected ; full of *reason* and of the hope of immortality ; looking not so much to the things of the world, but rather to the spiritual things beyond.

In fact, they were absorbed in their subject ; not fanatically, but as men with their full powers and senses, preaching to living men ; bringing all to bear, — their mind, their voice, their strength, their utterance, — in all simplicity and godly sincerity, yet, withal, *manfully*, as man to man.

And in the purity of the Jewish ritual, no one of bodily defect or infirmity, had been allowed to officiate in the holy offices. In obedience to God, — through whose revelations that worship was instituted — would there, could there, have been permitted any thing but the utmost integrity of

occurs the following passage by the authority of the pope himself : “ Let us not fear to draw nigh confidently to the throne of grace. Let us seek that throne *by the intercession of all who now surround it. Especially let us seek it through the holy apostles ; let us seek it through the most chaste spouse of the mother of God (St. Joseph) ; let us seek it, above all, through the Virgin Immaculate, whose intercessions with her Son have the relation, in a certain way, of commands.*”

See, also, “ Middleton’s Letter ” from Rome.

mind, voice, body, and soul, in its sacred services? \*

No. And especially in these times of all "manful" aspirations and activities, may the priests — *our* priests; ministers and servants of God — be ever, also, men with men! It is only in the free use of manly and God-given powers, before God and our fellow-men, that we can have a "reasonable," or even an "apostolic" service.

It is not, however, *richness* of ritual, in itself, if one so desires, that we would oppose: this is an æsthetic taste which belongs, more or less, to human nature; and undoubtedly in Religion — as in aught else, in things *innocent*, — unessential — may have its way. Our communion has never identified itself as a "sect," a "denomination," for upholding any *single*, or *individual* truth, or truths. Her spirit is, to embrace aught of *truth* — on whatever side.

Of external aids, or accessories, she has made no point — but of that which seemed simply *necessary* and *appropriate*. Her prevailing sen-

\* *Intoning*, as it is practised in England; and where it is well done, is impressive, and may undoubtedly assist in clearness of utterance, in a large assembly or congregation; but, in this country, does not this attempt — or, *some other* — to change the reading of the service, sometimes bear more affinity to what may be called "mouthings," "mutterings," even "*whinings*," — as the writer has occasionally heard, in some — late — church of our communion.

timent, therefore, in regard to Ritual, must be found in her Practice, Precedents, and Rubrics ; and these all point — as we have seen — to a ritual, *chaste, reasonable, and scriptural*.

“ Ritual-ism ” — in these days, and as its name implies, is an *excess* over this accustomed Ritual ; (and “ excess,” as was remarked elsewhere, tends naturally, or, in the philosophy of things, to “ deterioration.”)

But it is not the province of the author — nor would it be the place here — to discuss *external* details, — as to *what* may be “ excess ; ” or “ chaste,” “ reasonable ” and “ scriptural.”

It is the permanent, the essential, especially, that it was designed to take up, in this book : therefore let us turn simply to *doctrines* involved ; and where it would appear that *Ritualism*, is, or is liable to become, erroneous.

To explain our meaning, and for an example on minor points, — and which may be useful also for some, not specially “ ritualistic ” — we will take the practice which is almost universal in Anglican and American churches, — that of bowing the head, at the clause in the creeds — *And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord*.

There is no rubric in the Prayer Book directing this : it is not, therefore, strictly in our “ order of worship,” and may be optional ; but, as an acknowledgment of the words of the apostle,

it is a custom dear, probably, to the great majority of the members of our communion. There is no doubt, however, a confusion in some minds, at the present time, as to the precise *point* of acknowledgment, consequently some error of practice.

When the apostle uses the expression, "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,"\* he is alluding to his *final* triumph, and *spiritual* reign as LORD OVER ALL; and bowing simply as we do, at that clause in our creeds, seems no improper or unfitting tribute, although it is a literal rendering of the scripture, — anticipating, doing that now in time, — with a spiritual significance; instead of waiting for the hereafter.

But it is, at this day, not uncommon in some churches to see this practised, at least by individuals, at the words in the creed, *and was made man*; and in other parts of the service, where Jesus may be spoken of only *as* a man. This appears to us, clearly, incorrect, as Christ never allowed himself to be worshipped *as man*. He disclaimed any such honor, until after he should be risen; and Paul's words apply only to his state

\* The whole passage of St. Paul (Philippians ii.) is this: "Wherefore God, also, hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

*after* being exalted to the “right hand of the Father.”

Also, if one bows in the Gloria Patri, it is an error to do so at the name of the SON alone, this being an ascription to the DIVINE TRINITY ; and, as such, ALL are equally honored.

For another simple example : It is sometimes seen (here and there), that a congregation rises, at the entrance of the minister ; even though there may then be no “processional,” and remains standing until he is at the desk, or in the pulpit.

In private life, such would be an act of courtesy and honor to the *man* : in this case, it would be difficult to say if the reverence were intended to the *minister* or to *God*. As it is extremely doubtful, however, whether, in the minds of the people, the reverence is not to the *man*, rather than, through him, to their Maker ; and as no worship but that of God, should be introduced into God’s house,—the question might very suitably be asked, “If the only *safe* way would not be, to *avoid* such practice ?” \*

The *great* doctrines which are at issue in the

\* These “irregularities,” with the frequent bowings, sometimes *crossings*, etc., are no part of our *prescribed* services ; and often converts, or new-comers, fall into them, undoubtedly, in a great measure, from ignorance of their true meaning, and in their *zeal* for religious worship : but it is incumbent on *all* members, new or old, of our communion as well as every other, to see that their practices are *consistent* with the Bible, which is the one authority on which all must rest for *doctrinal* and *spiritual* truths.

"ritualistic" movement, are the same also which are at issue, between Papal and Protestant Christendom.

Let us look at some of these, as held by the Roman Church, — at that of the holy Eucharist ; of Christ's body crucified, His blood newly shed for us each time that "mass" is said ; — the "sacrifice" being thus repeated ; the bread and wine being literally transmuted into the real substance of our Lord's body.\*

Did Jesus or His followers, give any intimation of this continually-recurring miracle ? On the contrary, did not Christ say on the cross, His work *was finished* ? and Paul, that it was a sacrifice *once for all* ?

\* The doctrine of the "mass" is concisely stated in a Roman-Catholic work (as quoted in "The Encyclopædia Americana," art. "Mass") . . . "They do not offer a sacrifice different from that of the cross ; that it is Jesus Christ himself, who offers himself through the hands of the priests ; that he therefore is the principal priest or pontiff, and victim, as he was likewise on the cross." ~~He~~ goes on to say, however, "can we testify our gratitude to God better than by *offering to him the most precious of all the gifts which he has made to us*, — his only Son . . . ? We therefore have full ground to hope that God, touched by this *oblation*, will grant us" . . . etc. What is this, but taking to *ourselves* a *merit*, in thus offering up Christ in "sacrifice," as if He were our *own*, to do that ? 22

In the masses for the *dead*, who are still suffering in "purgatory," — not having sufficiently "atoned" for their sins by their *sufferings* in this life, — this same "sacrifice" is performed and offered as an *assistance*, for the *shortening* or remission of that punishment. In Roman-Catholic countries, these "masses" — "*sacrifices*" of the Saviour — are *bought*, and paid for in *money*.

The services of "Mass" were arranged and established by Gregory I., in the sixth century.

That He is spiritually present with us in the Lord's supper, we never doubt ; but it is by the Holy Ghost, his *representative*, who was to take *spiritually*, the place of His *bodily* presence. So far, it is Himself, in his Spiritual existence, who comes and abides with us ; but not by his corporeal flesh and blood : such, we believe, is the simple doctrine drawn from the Bible. But the doctrine of "transubstantiation" — the miracle of changing the bread and wine into Christ's material body, whenever the holy sacrament is administered — is one of those manifest corruptions, it would appear, from which the Roman Church itself must, sooner or later, be purged ; and shall *we*, happily freed from it, now assume it to ourselves ?

What *is* this doctrine of the perpetually-recurring sacrifice, but the ancient idea of sacrificial rites ; like the daily-renewed offerings in the temple, but which we are expressly told, in Scripture, were all *done away in Christ* ? His death, once occurred, was a full and complete fulfilment of the law, — no more "*sacrifice*" for sin ; or in the words of St. Paul, who, after Christ, is the inspiration of the Church catholic and of its doctrines, —

"Who *needeth not daily*, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's ; for *this he did once*, when

he offered up himself. . . . *Nor yet that he should offer himself often*, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others (for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world); but now *once*, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.\* This seems conclusive, as to Paul's manner of holding the doctrine; and so is it held by the great body of our branch of the Church, as well as by all Protestant Christendom, at this day.†

But to those who may think that the Roman doctrine of "transubstantiation" ‡ has a foundation in the words themselves of Jesus, in instituting the Holy Supper, we would submit the few

\* Heb. vii. 27; ix. 25, 26.

† The "growing practice" among the *extreme* ritualists in England, — of attempting to convert the rite of the holy communion into a service of mass after the Roman custom, is alluded to in the following quotations from a letter published in "The Churchman" of Aug. 9, 1873: "The service being so conducted that . . . the congregation shall be forced to become non-communicants. . . . Not only is there no 'pause,' so that those who wish to escape from this Roman corruption cannot do so without disturbing the fair devotees, who kneel pertinaciously in your way . . . but the priest hurries over the service so quickly, . . . that before you know where you are, the chance of communicating is gone; you have, like the rest, 'assisted at mass.'"

‡ Another Roman-Catholic writer, in "The Encyclopædia Americana," art. "Lord's Supper," gives, in the following short definition, an idea of this doctrine: "The bread and wine cease to exist in reality, though they remain still in appearance. That which really exists, is the sacramentally (not visibly) present body and blood of Christ. By a miracle of the Omnipotent, a change is effected, and this we call *transubstantiation*."

following comments, taking St. Paul's representation of the rite, who, although the last of the apostles, undoubtedly held it as had been maintained by them, in the apostolic or "*inspired*" era. There had been no dispute of it among themselves; and St. Paul only discussed it against new converts, who little understood its character or meaning.

He says \* of the bread, as quoting the words of the Master, "Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me." And of the wine, "This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

The express *reason* given, in both cases, is, that it is in *remembrance* of the Lord Jesus. "For," he continues, "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until he come," — ye do keep the memorial, the signification of His death, unto the end.

And he warns them against *desecrating* this occasion, because the subject of it was holy, — was Christ himself. They should not partake of it "unworthily," — overlooking its spiritual meaning, not discerning the *Lord's body* in this memorial, this symbol of Christ, — lest they should be guilty, spiritually, of the "body and

\* 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

blood of the Lord " (they could not be so materially, as He was already departed from the earth). They should not make it a common feast, to satisfy their natural hunger ; it was not designed in any manner for the *bodily* appetite : in doing so, they would bring condemnation on themselves.

Previously, in the same epistle (preceding chapter) he had said, " The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? " — the *inter-communing*, the fellowship, the con-socialion with him, spiritually ?

That such is the meaning, is apparent from the next verse, which follows as a sequence : " For *we*, being *many*, are *one bread*, *one body* ; for we are all *partakers* of that *one bread*."

The " bread " here, then, is but a figure, a representation, of the body of Christ, and of *ourselves*, also, as " partakers " of that bread, that body : as the apostle could not have meant to imply, by that literal expression, that *we* were changed miraculously *into* that " bread," that " body " of our Lord. Such construction would put all nature, reason, *spirit* even, at defiance ; for if we cannot commune *spiritually*, but are obliged to be transformed into the *same* substance, — " transubstantiated," — " spirit " is of

no use ; it may as well not exist. Evidently, therefore, this could not have been the meaning of the apostle ; and he must only have meant to infer that we were *one* "communion" with Christ ; that we were bound to him, figuratively or spiritually, as *one* "body."

If, then, it is not necessary for *us* to be changed by miracle, to become that "bread," that "body," or, — which is to the same effect, that *they* should be changed into *us*, for the same purpose, — why should it be necessary that the Lord himself, who is far more spiritual than we, whose existence, in fact, is now ALL spiritual, — spiritualized, — should be forced to undergo such transformation, — "transmuting," — in order to meet *our* spirits in this same "communion" ?

Would it not be derogatory to the Saviour, to conceive of Him as thus under necessity of becoming again flesh and blood, being obliged to descend again into bodily form, in order to impart himself to our spirits ? Is He so restricted in spiritual office, power, and influence, that He cannot come direct to our souls without the intervention of his *corporeal* presence ? This would be against all our scriptural and rational ideas of Himself, and his agent, the Holy Spirit, whose express office it is to be the bearer — of *His* communications, ideas, messages — of his peace, joy, love, — to our hearts. And it is *him-*

*self*, in this holy power and influence, who comes direct to our minds ; no need more of the body, or the flesh.

If *we* can apprehend Him spiritually (and it is spiritually only that we can do so, he being no longer visible to mortal sense), if we can do this, how should not He who is almighty, omnipotent, and omnipresent, communicate himself to us without returning again to the material form which he was, — of which we still are ?

That He is present with us in the Holy Communion in his “spiritual” *Personality*, we firmly believe ; but it will have been seen that we perceive no foundation in the Scriptures, or in reason, and in the spiritual understanding, for the *necessity* of this singular doctrine of the Roman Church — transubstantiation.\*

The effort to introduce the Confessional (in the petition lately signed by a large number of the English clergy), appears to us as another of those “excesses” which would at once Romanize the Anglican communion, and convert it into a

\* The doctrine of “transubstantiation” was formally decreed, after having first met much opposition, in a council of the church under Pope Innocent III., in the year 1215 ; in the same manner that in late years the doctrines of the “Immaculate Conception” and “Papal Infallibility” have been decreed by Pius IX.

To the public establishment of that doctrine, succeeded the “Adoration of the host,” (believing God to be bodily present), — *elevation of the Host*, as is practised in all Roman-Catholic churches.

sacerdotal institution ; where *priestly domination* would take the place of true human intelligence and religious freedom, and would despoil the worshippers of their genuine responsibility to their own conscience, and to God. Accustomed in this way to defer to the clergy, the habit, and with it the power, of moral discrimination of themselves, would soon be lost ; and thus would be taken the first step towards that moral decline, which has been the fate of all people and countries that have been in such manner, not incorrectly called, “priest-ridden.” Philosophy and all human experience teach us, that it is not safe to commit such authority as the “confessional” implies, even in a religious way, to men, mortal like ourselves. The temptation to human nature is too great for men, — and those the servants of God, — to put themselves, voluntarily, in such position. The responsibility on their souls, of their necessary work, must assuredly be heavy enough, without their coveting, — or having placed upon them, — the added care of the *private* consciences, of their congregations. May true enlightenment, and an humble following of the Saviour, in those who are “set over souls,” preserve our Christian institutions from so irremediable an error !

Ritualism, where it is genuine, or where it is

*not* "Romanism" in "disguise," is responsible, as are all others, to its own conscience; to its church and Christian obligations, and to God; to the doctrines of the Bible, which it possesses; and to the illumination of the Holy Spirit within the heart, as to *what* and *how* it teaches of divine things, — that it bind not "burdens" upon men's shoulders; that it take not away the "key of knowledge," and so hinder those who "would enter in."

We, who are not "ritualists," are responsible also to our conscience, to God, and to the Church, — that we preserve the "purity" of the faith; the "simplicity" of the doctrines of Christ, — and ALL — we and they, — That we "DO JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, AND WALK HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD."













